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Editor's letter



JUDE NORLEDGE

There's been a shift in recent years as to how, as gardeners, we should consider autumn. On the one hand, it is most definitely the time to start looking and planning ahead (hopefully your orders are in and your bulbs awaiting planting).

On the other hand, autumn is no longer seen as a time to start shutting down the garden. There is plenty more to enjoy both in terms of long-flowering plants and an acceptance of beauty in decay, not to mention the homes and shelter that plants, at the end of their growing season, offer to wildlife. Last month's RHS Chelsea Flower Show was the perfect showcase for all that is still glorious and key in our gardens as we pass the autumn equinox.

To help immerse ourselves in the season and all it has to offer, this issue we ask gardener Jacky Mills to give us some bulb-planting ideas. She's put together some alternative ways of displaying bulbs that veer away from the usual outdoor arrangements, and involve encouraging bulbs to flower earlier so they can be used indoors in creative ways, when winter is at its darkest.

Before we succumb to darkness, our garden features look at how bright and light filled this time of year can be. We visit Parcevall Hall in North Yorkshire, flanked by mature trees and displaying established plantings that enhance the garden's wonderful structure. Meanwhile, our ongoing seasonal highlights from Malverleys in Hampshire goes down the lush, tropical route that reaches a peak this month.

Plus, we ask designer Adam Shepherd to reveal the secrets behind his striking plant spheres. Move over the hanging basket...

We hope you enjoy the issue,

SORREL EVERTON, ACTING EDITOR



JASON INGRAM

Take inspiration from Jacky Mills' fabulous ideas for bulb displays that will help to banish any winter blues, page 50.



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1. As rated by Willis Towers Watson. 2. MSCI All Country World Index.

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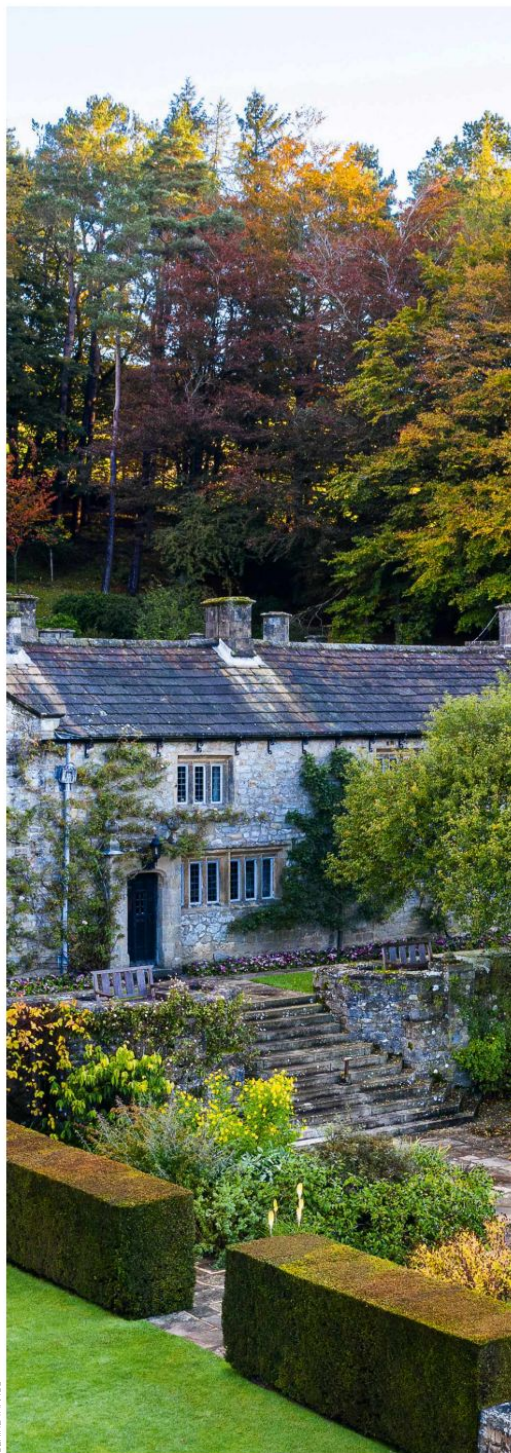
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CLARET TAVAKS



Created in the 1920s by passionate plantsman Sir William Milner, the glorious gardens of Parcevall Hall in North Yorkshire belie their exposed location, page 34.

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COVER IMAGE

Plant sphere by
Adam Shepherd

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- Win a luxury, two-night garden break at the Budock Vean Hotel in south Cornwall* – page 115

*Competition open to UK readers only

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Rory Dusoir

Rory introduces us to the best evergreen ferns, page 56. "Ferns are indispensable foliage plants, more varied and adaptable than might be thought. Evergreen ferns are particularly valuable to gardeners."



Jacky Hobbs

Jacky visits a steeply sided plot in Berkshire, page 64. "The garden is really energising. Colour, texture, structure, movement, wildlife and water are all harmonised within a third-of-an-acre plot."



Will Salter

Will photographs a Sam Cox-designed Australian garden, page 88. "With Sam's plant knowledge and creativity, it was a joy to capture a garden that seems to blend into the wild coastal landscape."

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James Basson

James lives in the South of France where he runs Scape Design with his wife Helen, specialising in low-maintenance and dry gardens. He is a fervent advocate for creating sustainable landscapes. The winner of four Chelsea Gold medals, he was awarded Best in Show in 2017.

Fergus Garrett

Fergus was appointed head gardener at Great Dixter by Christopher Lloyd in 1993. He is passionate about passing on his knowledge through student programmes at Dixter and worldwide lectures. He was awarded an RHS Associate of Honour in 2008 and an RHS Victoria Medal of Honour in 2019.

Anna Pavord

Anna's books include her bestseller *The Tulip* and most recently *Landskipping*. For 30 years she was *The Independent's* gardening correspondent. In 2000 the RHS awarded her the Veitch Memorial Medal. She lives and gardens in Dorset.

Dan Pearson

Dan is one of the UK's best-known garden designers, familiar to many through his gardening columns in the *Observer* magazine. Eight of his gardens, including the Tokachi Millennium Forest in Japan, have won awards and he was awarded Best in Show for his garden at Chelsea in 2015.

Sarah Price

Sarah is one of the UK's most sought-after garden designers who gained worldwide recognition for her designs for the 2012 London Olympic Park. She won Gold at Chelsea in 2012 and 2018, and was GMG Garden Columnist of the Year in 2016 for her design series in *Gardens Illustrated*.

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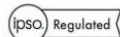
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We all know that creating a beautiful garden takes time. Time and more than a little patience. At this time of year, we're busy planting bulbs whose green shoots we won't see until spring. But we plant them anyway, safe in the knowledge that under the soil nature is working its magic and in time we'll be rewarded with stunning displays of jewel-like colour.

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DIG IN

What's happening, what's in flower and what to buy this month



BLACKFIELD INSTALLATION BY ZADOK BEN-DAVID, 2008. ANNANDALE GALLERIES, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

Fragile world

"I have always been fascinated by the idea of how humans rely on nature for survival yet seem to forget this essential fact in everyday life," says the London-based Israeli artist Zadok Ben-David, who this month gets his first UK-based solo exhibition since 2008 incorporating new and existing works. Exploring themes of tragedy and hope, the exhibition will shine a creative light on the relationship between people and the natural world with as its centrepiece a site-specific floor installation *Blackfield* (above). Comprising more than 17,000 hand-painted, steel-etched flowers, derived from illustrations in 19th-century botanical encyclopedias, this 360-degree artwork, assembled by hand, plays on sensations of perception and perspective, and allows visitors to immerse themselves in Ben-David's unique vision of nature.

Zadok Ben-David: Natural Reserve is at the Shirley Sherwood Gallery of Botanical Art, Kew, from 16 October 2021 to 27 March 2022.

Admission is included with entry to the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, but tickets must be booked in advance at [kew.org](https://www.kew.org)

News

COMPILED BY KATIE BEALE

Small world

Earlier this year the International Garden Photographer of the Year competition launched its Macro Art project, to offer photographers a unique opportunity to use macro photography to open up the world of plants and gardens on a minute scale. For her winning image, *Skeleton Leaves*, Claire Carter used a macro lens and extension tubes to get as close as possible to the intricate patterns of her subject. You can see this and other winning images when the competition entries go on tour next year and now at igpoty.com

CLAIRE CARTER



WAXING AND WANING

Waxcaps come in many shapes and sizes, but their numbers are dwindling as intensive farming destroys their natural habitat of old, undisturbed grassland. The conservation charity Plantlife wants us all to record any sightings on its survey app, as knowing where waxcaps thrive helps us pinpoint fragments of rare, species-rich meadows, which store carbon and can help fight climate change. Find out more at plantlife.org.uk

LEFT TO RIGHT: RAY WOODS, DAVID HARRIS, AND TREVOR BINES

Turn of season

As the evenings draw in, we all feel like spending more time indoors. What better way to embrace the mellow season than dressing your table with a warm, autumnal glow for a celebratory harvest supper. Along with a selection of table decorations, from cute, felted pinecones to pumpkin-shaped lights, the Lights4fun autumn range includes a burnt-orange wreath that can be paired with a string of micro lights for added sparkle. The 50cm-diameter Autumnal Wreath costs £41.99, the Pinecone Felt Autumn Decorations are £14.99 for three and the Ceramic Pumpkin Light costs £32.99. Find the full range at lights4fun.co.uk





Sow ahead

It's never too early to start planning next year's planting. Dobies has launched a new seed collection for 2022, including a colourful range of vegetables. Its spring onion, Allium cepa 'Lilia' (above), is a dual-purpose Italian cultivar, bursting with flavour. A pack of 550 seeds costs only £2.49. Also included in the range are cucumbers, pea shoots and a super-sweet cherry tomato 'Honeycomb' that's perfect for salads. Discover the full selection at dobies.co.uk

21 WILD FLOWERS, 2013, SCREENPRINT 89.5 X 72.5 CM



Life lessons

Dame Elizabeth Blackadder, the Scottish painter and printmaker who died earlier this year, was a passionate plantswoman, famed for her lyrical paintings of flowers. A new exhibition, *Elizabeth Blackadder: Favourite Flowers*, curated by the Scottish Gallery, brings together a selection of her floral screenprints, watercolours and etchings at London's Garden Museum. Some of the works will be on sale in aid of the museum's education programme. 19 October – 21 November, £12. gardenmuseum.org.uk



DR K WESTBROOK

RARE BEAUTY

Plant Heritage has announced the 2021 winner of its Threatened Plant of the Year competition, which celebrates rare and unusual cultivars that are not currently available commercially. The winner, chosen from a shortlist of 12, was the beautiful *Camellia x williamsii* 'Yesterday' (left) with large, pink flowers, grown by Peter Westbrook in Edinburgh. You can see all the winners at plantheritage.org.uk

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DIARY

COMPILED BY KATIE BEALE AND ANNIE GATTI

1 Visit Yeo Valley Organic Garden

Explore over six-and-a-half acres of edible and ornamental plants as Yeo Valley opens its organic garden on Saturdays until 30 October, 10am-5pm. Advance booking essential. Holt Farm, Bath Road, Blagdon, Bristol BS40 7SQ. Tel 01761 462798, yeovalley.co.uk

2 Autumn at Hever Castle

Soak up the autumn colour at Hever Castle and Gardens in Kent with stunning foliage around the garden including the famous Boston ivy, which reaches its peak this month. Until 31 October. Tickets can be booked online in advance. Hever Road, Hever, Edenbridge, Kent TN8 7NG. Tel 01732 865224, hevercastle.co.uk

3 Japan Festival at Kew

Explore the art, plants and culture of Japan this month as the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, opens its autumnal *momijigari* trail of plants with red leaves, taking in Japanese landmarks such as the Japanese Gateway, Minka House and Ginkgo Grove, and displays inside the Temperate House and Marianne North Gallery. Until 31 October. Admission included with garden entry. Kew, Richmond, London TW9 3AE. Tel 020 8332 5655, kew.org

4 Plants First!

Spend a day with designer Sarah Price at the Horniman Museum in London on a Garden Masterclass that will look at how plants grow in the wild and how to put plants together in the garden. 15 October, 10am-4.30pm. £180. 100 London Road, Forest Hill, London SE23 3PQ. gardenmasterclass.org

5 The Watergardens Open Day

Don't miss the opportunity to explore The Watergardens in Kingston-upon-Thames on its National Garden Scheme open day. Originally planted in the 1860s by the Veitch family as part of their Coombe Wood Nursery, this nine-acre, Japanese-style garden features streams, waterfalls and many rare trees offering stunning autumn colour. 17 October, 2pm-4pm. £5. Warren Road, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey KT2 7LF. ngs.org.uk

6 Thenford Arboretum & Garden Open Day

Take your last chance of the year to visit Michael Heseltine's Oxfordshire garden. Spread over 70 acres, it features a water garden, a sculpture garden, a rose garden, a rill and more than 3,000 different trees and shrubs. 22 October, 2-5pm. £16. Advance booking essential. Thenford, nr Banbury, Oxfordshire OX17 2BX. Tel 07881 811294, thenfordarboretum.com

7 Bulb Planting Workshop

Learn how to create beautiful spring bulb and potted displays on this one-day workshop with Aberglasney Gardens' head gardener. The day also includes a guided tour of the gardens, refreshments, and lunch. 28 October, 10.30am-3pm. £55. Llangathen, Carmarthenshire SA32 8QH. Tel 01558 668998, aberglasney.org

8 The Landscape Show

Now in its tenth year, the Landscape Show is a must for landscape architects, designers and anyone with an interest in landscape gardening. This year promises a host of exciting exhibitors alongside a selection of seminars delivered by leading names in the industry. 3-4 November, 10am-6pm (closes 5pm Thursday). NEC, North Avenue, Martson Green, Birmingham B40 1NT. Tel 020 7821 8221, landscapeshow.co.uk

9 'The Wonder of Plants' Talk by Matthew Biggs

Join the gardener, author and broadcaster Matthew Biggs for a fascinating talk on how plants survive in extreme climates, from the high-altitude Andes to America's arid deserts. 11 November, 7-9.30pm. £4. St Andrew's Church Hall, Churchgate House, Downside Bridge Road, Cobham, Surrey KT11 3EJ. plantheritage.org.uk

10 Certificate in Garden Design

Book now for a new 27-week, part-time Certificate in Garden Design from the NR Training School of Horticulture at Lowther Castle & Gardens. Held in the inspiring surroundings of Lowther Castle with its Dan Pearson-designed gardens, the course will cover the principles and art of garden design, and fundamental plant knowledge. Tuesdays, 11 January to 19 July 2022, 10am-4pm. £900. Lowther, Penrith, Cumbria CA10 2HH. nrtraining.co.uk

All information is correct at time of going to press, but may be subject to change.

Tickets for most events will be limited to ensure social distancing and must be booked in advance.

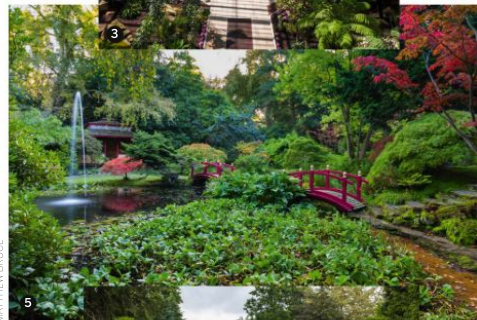
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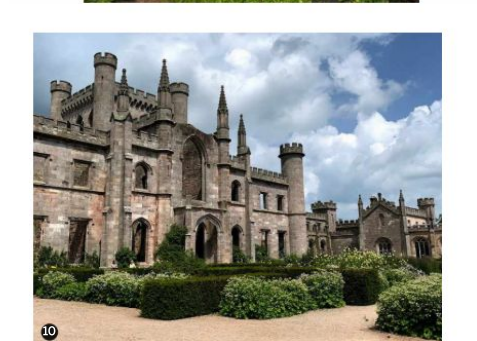
PETER SMITH



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Gartenart

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Nigel & Mandy Keene Basingstoke

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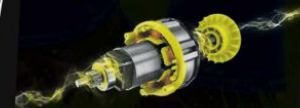
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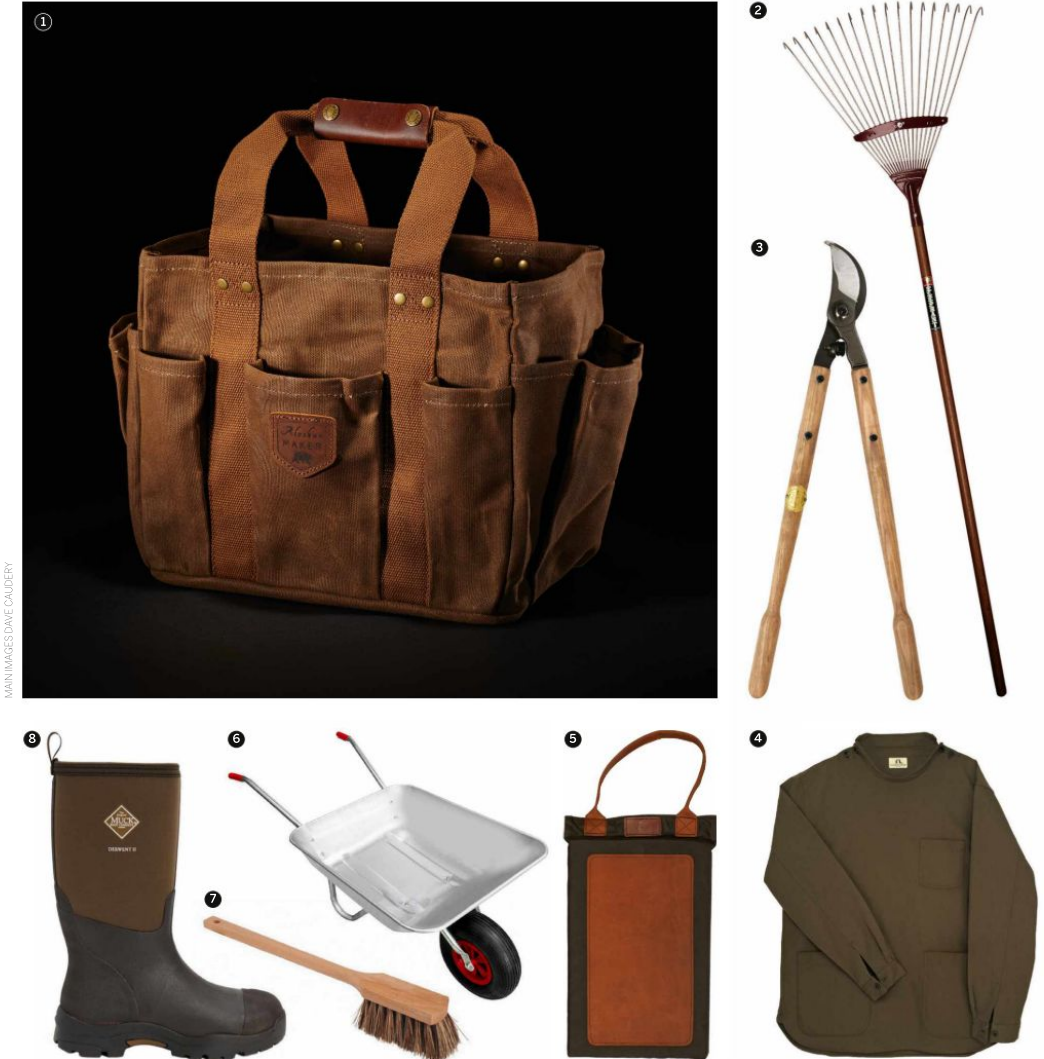
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KITTED OUT

For autumn clearing in the garden

COMPILED BY KATIE BEALE



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FARGESIA ANGUSTISSIMA

I am building up an interesting collection of bamboos at Hunting Brook. This graceful, arching specimen (formerly *Borinda angustissima*) has narrow leaves, and stands out as one of the very best in my collection. It is very tall and non-invasive with an extremely narrow base, which makes it suitable for growing in most garden spaces. It also looks fabulous grown in large containers. New canes sometimes have a purplish look with white dust on them. Propagation is by division but is very difficult because of the way the canes grow together tightly at the base.

Height 4m.

Origin China, Sichuan province.

Conditions Fertile, well-drained soil; full sun.

Hardiness RHS H5.

Season of interest July – October.



CHARLIE JOHNSON

Jimi Blake is the owner and creator of Hunting Brook Gardens.
huntingbrook.com

October plants

Late summer may be giving way to autumn this month but Jimi's selection still has plenty of funky foliage and hot colour, from a sizzling salvia to a vibrant kniphofia

WORDS JIMI BLAKE PHOTOGRAPHS JASON INGRAM



ANGELICA 'LOUSHAN FILIGREE'

I bought this delightful angelica from Paul Barney of Edulis Plants in the UK a few years ago. Paul collected it from seed in Guizhou province in southwest China 12 years ago. This umbellifer is unique as it flowers in September and October with a beautiful, delicate spray of white flowers, followed by umbel-like seedheads. It has prominent, red-veined stems and serrated, light-green foliage, which looks very attractive through summer and autumn. I propagate it by fresh seed sown in autumn, which usually germinates the following spring.

Height 60cm.

Origin China.

Conditions Well-drained soil; full sun.

Hardiness RHS H6.

Season of interest September – October.

CORYDALIS ELATA 'BLUE SUMMIT'

I started to collect *Corydalis* last year for growing in my new woodland beds. This one is a selection from nurserywoman Elizabeth Strangman. It is definitely the longest-flowering *Corydalis* at Hunting Brook. The blue flowers start in June and keep going until November. The secret is to plant them in good, rich soil that does not dry out during the summer months. If your soil gets too dry in summer, the plant will stop flowering, go dormant and eventually die. I propagate it by division in autumn or surface sowing as it needs light to germinate.

Height 40cm.

Origin Garden (Sichuan, China).

Conditions Moisture-retentive soil; dappled shade.

Hardiness RHS H5.

Season of interest June – November.



SALVIA STOLONIFERA

It has been very difficult for me to choose only one *Salvia* at this time of year. But this is one of my favourites, with its rusty-orange flowers, and it is also totally hardy. It was discovered in southern Mexico in recent years and is slowly making its way on to the garden scene. As the name suggests (stolon indicates a creeping, horizontal stem), it does spread, but not to the extent that it is a problem. Unusually for a salvia, it will tolerate some shade. It is easily propagated by cuttings in summer or division taken in spring as it is coming into growth.

Height 50cm.

Origin Southern Mexico.

Conditions Fertile, well-drained soil; full sun.

Hardiness RHS H5.

Season of interest July – October.



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KALOPANAX SEPTEMLOBUS F. MAXIMOWICZII

This is one of my favourite foliage plants. The leaves are like sculpture as they unfurl in spring in tones of silver turning to green with large, pendulous, palmate, deeply lobed leaves. This gives it a tropical look but it is actually totally hardy. It can be allowed to grow into a large tree or can be pollarded each spring. Through pruning, it can be used in smaller spaces and will produce larger leaves, adding even more to the lush, tropical effect. The reliable autumn leaf colour is a beautiful, bright, buttery yellow. I propagate it by seed sown fresh in autumn.

Height 12m (if grown into a tree).

Origin Japan.

Conditions Well-drained soil; full sun.

Hardiness RHS H4.

Season of interest Spring to autumn.

GERANIUM PHAEUM 'LISA'

This geranium was introduced by Coen Jansen, whose nursery in the Netherlands is not to be missed. I grow it for its foliage, which has beautiful, mottled, yellow and green variegation with black dots. I use it to brighten up shady spots from spring through into winter. It flowers from April well into June with silvery-purple, reflexed petals. If you cut it down to ground level once flowering has finished it will produce another flush of healthy leaves, which looks great when most other plants are dying back down in autumn. It is easily propagated by division.

Height 70cm.

Origin Garden (species Europe).

Conditions Fertile, well-drained soil; dappled shade.

Hardiness RHS H7.

Season of interest Foliage from spring to winter. Flowers April – June.



ERYNGIUM VENUSTUM

I have always loved eryngiums, especially those species that hail from South America. This particular one originates from Mexico and seems happy in my well-drained sand garden. Like many of my favourite plants it is savage and spiny, and has a tendency to grab you by the leg if you make the mistake of walking past it without paying due attention. The narrow spiny leaves look amazing growing in the sand, and they are followed by silver thistle-like flowers. I propagate it by seed which needs to be sown fresh in the autumn and will germinate the following spring.

Height 45cm.

Origin Mexico.

Conditions Well-drained soil; full sun.

Hardiness RHS H5, USDA 6a-10b.

Season of interest Autumn.

Places to visit

Recommended places to see seasonal plants at their best

Be sure to check opening times and travel restrictions. Many garden visits will need to be pre-booked.

Fergus Garrett and his team have consistently inspired me since I was a young gardener in Dublin. I was brought over to meet Fergus by my then boss in the late 1990s and I have continued to visit a few times a year ever since. The **Great Dixter** plant fairs are the best in Europe and take place in spring and the first weekend in October. This is also the best time to see

Great Dixter's famous Exotic Garden. Northiam, Rye, East Sussex TN31 6PH. Tel 01797 252878. greatdixter.co.uk

Not too far from Great Dixter is another 'great' worth a visit at this time of year: **Great Comp Garden** in Kent. Most years it closes its gates for the season at the end of October, but this year it is staying open from Thursday to Saturday until

late November, when many of the long-blooming salvias for which it is famed – *Salvia involucreata*, *Salvia leucantha* and *Salvia 'Amistad'* – will still be looking great. Sadly, it is only the gardens that are extending their opening times and the nursery of garden curator William Dyson will be closing as normal on 31 October. Comp Lane, St Mary's Platt,

Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 8QS. Tel 01732 885094. greatcomparden.co.uk

Rowallane Gardens in Northern Ireland have always held a special place in my heart. Many people will have visited in April and May to enjoy one of the very best spring gardens with an incredible rhododendron collection surrounded by spring meadows. In autumn, however, the ►

CANNA 'TANEY'

This canna was raised at Longwood Gardens in Pennsylvania by Robert J Armstrong in the early 1970s – so it's as old as me. I bought mine a few years ago from Urban Jungle Nursery in Norfolk. It is one of the giant cannas, growing up to 2.5m, which is why I would not garden without it. It has massive, lance-shaped leaves with soft-apricot, peachy flowers in September to October. I like to use it repeated through my tropical planting to create that repetition of architectural leaves. It is known as a water canna so appreciates plenty of water. I propagate it by division in spring as it's starting into growth.

Height 2.5m.

Origin Garden (species South Mexico).

Conditions Fertile, well-drained soil; full sun.

Hardiness RHS H5.

Season of interest July – October.



KNIPHOFIA THOMSONII 'KICHOCHOE'

John Grimshaw, director of Yorkshire Arboretum, raised a batch of Kenyan kniphofias from seed and selected the best from those that germinated. 'Kichochoe' (Swahili for poker) was one of those seedlings. It was selected and named for its hardiness, ability to bulk up and its beautiful flowers. The flower buds start off green then open to the most gorgeous apricot mixed with soft yellow. At Hunting Brook it flowers constantly from August into November. I propagate it by division in springtime as it starts into growth. I originally bought this from Cotswold Garden Flowers in the UK.

Height 90cm.

Origin Kenya.

Conditions Well-drained sun; full sun.

Hardiness RHS H4.

Season of interest July – November.



GERANIUM 'PINK PENNY'

This geranium was bred by Marco van Noort in the Netherlands who is also the man behind the introduction of *Geranium* Rozanne (= 'Gerwat'). This *Geranium* 'Pink Penny' was new to me last year and flowered from June until November non-stop. Its foliage forms a mound with mauve-pink flowers with a pale eye and dark veins. I have it repeated through one of my borders as an underplanting to *Heptapleurum macrophyllum* combined with *Stachys byzantina* 'Big Ears' and *Tanacetum niveum*. I have propagated it by basal cuttings taken from the new growth in April.

Height 45cm.

Origin Garden.

Conditions Humus-rich, well-drained soil; full sun.

Hardiness RHS H4.

Season of interest June – November.



CHARLES HAWES / GARDEN PHOTO

▷ gardens – now run by the super talented Claire McNally – are spectacular with fabulous colours and well worth a second visit. Crossgar Road, Saintfield, Ballynahinch, Co Down BT24 7LH. Tel 028 9751 0131, nationaltrust.org.uk
I have really missed my regular visits to **RHS Garden Wisley** during the pandemic. On my last visit I was so impressed with the

new, contemporary entrance, the sand garden and the heather landscape. Wisley is truly one of the great gardens of the world under the curatorship of Matthew Pottage. At this time of year, the autumn colour is breath-taking and if you visit don't miss the new gardens around the (new) RHS Hilltop science and education facility. Wisley

Lane, Wisley, Woking GU23 6QB. Tel 01483 224234, rhs.org.uk/gardens/wisley
When visiting gardens at this time of year I am obviously looking for gardens with good autumn colour and **Yorkshire Arboretum** is one of my favourites. The arboretum consists of 120 acres including 6,000 trees from around the world and extensive native meadows.

Work is underway to build a new Tree Health Centre in the arboretum. Castle Howard, York YO60 7BY. Tel 01653 648598, yorkshirearboretum.org
I had the pleasure of visiting the spectacular **Fishermans Bay Gardens** on the Banks Peninsula in New Zealand a few years ago. Jill and Richard Simpson have a fascinating collection of plants

including 150 species and cultivars of the veronicas formally known as hebes. I loved the contemporary planting with the backdrop of the Pacific Ocean. When we can travel again I highly recommend visiting New Zealand and not missing Fishermans Bay. Fishermans Bay Road, RD3, Akaroa 7583, New Zealand. Tel +64 3 304 7367, fishermansbay.nz



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KITCHEN DUTIES

With pumpkins gathered, spring onions planted and corn salad sown, Aaron kicks back a little and potters at the stove making jams and chutneys from summer's stored bounty

WORDS AARON BERTELSEN ILLUSTRATION ALICE PATTULLO

Regular readers of this column will know that it is rare for me to advocate taking a break from the garden. I am much more likely to be exhorting you to get out there and busy yourself with any one of the myriad tasks that seem to need tackling throughout the year. October, though, is one of those times when the urgency seems to fade away a little. Here in the UK at least, the days are usually mild, and the risk of frost is still some way off.

Many plants will still be productive, but the pace is slower and gentler than during the late-summer peak. I spend the time doing a little light harvesting and working my way through the fruit and vegetables I stashed in the freezer during the summer. This is jam and chutney season. It is also time for one of my favourite tasks: bringing in the pumpkins. I store mine on wooden crates in a heating chamber under the kitchen yard. It's warm and dry, with excellent ventilation. And because the washing machine is down there, I can pay my pumpkins regular visits to check for any signs of rot.

What to sow

Provided the weather is mild, there should still be time to sow some winter salads. There are many hardy varieties to choose from, and they're easy to grow. One of my favourites is corn salad, so called because it derives from an arable weed found growing between the stubs of corn crops after harvesting. Also known as lamb's lettuce or mache, its small, succulent, dark-green leaves make a deliciously nutty addition to a salad bowl. It will thrive equally well in a container outside your door or in open ground, but it does grow quite slowly, so if you have the space sow every two weeks to ensure a continued supply.

Sow seed direct, covering it with a thin layer of soil. Water in well, then protect with a layer of fleece to speed up germination and help the plants get established before the temperature drops. Even at this time of year, salad crops can be prone to bolting if they are overcrowded, so keep an eye on the seedlings as they develop and thin out regularly. Harvest whole rosettes or just remove individual leaves.





What to plant out

This is a good time to plant out spring onions. Cooler temperatures mean less risk of bolting and of the fungal diseases that tend to affect them in the warmer months. Recently, I have been enjoying a cultivar called 'White Lisbon', which is known for its winter hardiness and works equally well raw in salads or cooked as a base for soups and stews.

The seedlings should be planted about 10cm apart. Avoid the temptation to put them any closer together – good air circulation is crucial here. I usually help mine along with a covering of fleece, but be ready to remove it on days when the weather is good to help keep the fungus at bay. The other thing to watch out for is birds – they love to dig up the newly planted seedlings and strew them over the ground. Just replant them. One final note of caution – if possible, plant onions in a different area of the garden each year to avoid the build-up of fungal pathogens in the soil.

What to harvest

Growing up in New Zealand, pumpkins formed a central part of our winter diet. That wasn't the case when I moved to the UK in the early 1990s, but people are now recognising the value of this delicious, versatile fruit. The secret to a good crop is to use plenty of organic matter and be cautious with watering. Plants must not be allowed to dry out, but too much water will give insipid-tasting fruits. The harder they are grown, the better they will keep and the better they will taste – you'll see what I mean when you try my spiced pumpkin soup. I leave them in the garden for as long as possible to let the skin ripen and form a tough, protective layer but by the end of October the sun is too weak for further ripening, and in any case, I'm ready to start clearing and digging the garden. When harvesting, leave the stem as long as possible and be careful not to bruise the flesh. The fruits should last well throughout the winter in a dry, rodent-free space with good ventilation.

Jobs for October

Many plants will continue to crop well into October so do keep up

with the picking. This is the final call for tomatoes. If they are showing some colours, bring them in and put them on a sunny windowsill to finish ripening; if they remain stubbornly green, bring them in anyway. Better to make a couple of jars of green tomato chutney than have them go to waste.

Mild weather plus rain is the perfect recipe for weed growth.

Do try to keep on top of weeding. By keeping the soil around plants clear, you'll be allowing maximum light and air to penetrate, and depriving slugs and snails of a hiding place.

Give crops such as Swiss chard, perpetual spinach and kale (that

is, plants that will be in the ground all winter) a good clean, removing any dead or yellowing leaves. This will help to stimulate new growth and keep them cropping throughout the colder months.

I often sow *Amaranthus* among my pumpkins, partly for the glorious reddish-purple colour but also for the seed. This is the time to harvest it. Just remove the feathery seedheads and leave them on a windowsill to dry. I like to grind them and add them to bread, soups and casseroles where they bring a peppery flavour and a welcome helping of protein and micronutrients.

You can find Aaron's recipe for spiced pumpkin soup at gardensillustrated.com/recipes

Leaving a legacy

With Cancer Research UK's Free Will Service, leaving a gift in your Will to aid vital research has never been easier

When in 2008, Alan Sugden began to experience some significant discomfort, his doctor soon raised the possibility of bowel cancer. "As soon as the doctor mentioned that it might be bowel cancer, I knew that it was," says Alan. "My boss had died of bowel cancer and it was very much in the forefront of my mind. I just knew that I had it"

After a colonoscopy confirmed his fears, Alan started treatment straight away, and was invited to join FoxtROT, a Cancer Research UK clinical trial testing a new treatment for people with bowel cancer. Patients would be given chemotherapy before surgery to remove their tumours, as well as further chemotherapy afterwards. This differed from the gold standard of care treatment at the time, which usually only included chemotherapy after surgery.

By August 2009, Alan had undergone all of the treatments and operations – as well as additional chemotherapy sessions to make sure the cancer had completely gone – and was well enough to return to work. His

experience and the gratitude he feels to Cancer Research UK for enabling people to try pioneering new treatments through trials, has prompted Alan to leave a gift in his Will to Cancer Research UK. It is thanks to those supporters who, like Alan, make these gifts in Wills that Cancer Research UK can fund large-scale projects with huge potential. Gifts in Wills fund a third of Cancer Research UK's research and are vital to accelerating progress to save more lives.

If like Alan you too choose to leave a gift in your Will to Cancer Research UK, you will be helping to fund life-saving research that could bring forward the day when all cancers are cured. Alan has chosen to leave a residuary gift in his Will. After taking care of your loved ones, you can leave a share, or the remainder, of your estate to Cancer Research UK. As it's less likely to be affected by inflation, it's the best way to ensure the value of gift you want to make is received.

Alternatively, you could leave a specific sum of money or gift, such as stocks and shares. To help you decide

which is best for you, Cancer Research UK's Free Will Service allows you to contact one of its trusted Will-writing partners, who will guide you through the process.

Sadly, cancer is not a rare disease, and there are many people like Alan across the UK. One in two people in the UK born after 1960 will get cancer in their lifetime.¹ But in the past 40 years, cancer survival has doubled in the UK. Two in four people now survive their cancer for at least ten years and the ambition of Cancer Research UK is that by 2034, three in four people will survive their cancer, but this will only be possible through the continued generosity of people like you, for which Cancer Research UK is beyond grateful.

"My cancer was treatable," says Alan. "That's thanks to the work of organisations such as Cancer Research UK, who keep investing in these areas."

¹ Ahmad AS et al. British Journal of Cancer, 2015



Together we will beat cancer



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GARDENING TALENT

JENNIFER WARNER

Former teacher Jennifer has just completed a traineeship at Audley End House and Gardens in Essex, and is now starting on the Kew Diploma in Horticulture

PORTRAIT ANDREW MONTGOMERY

First plant love Like many children, I fell in love with cacti and had a windowsill full of prickly friends. I have a few now, and thankfully I understand their watering requirements a little better, rather than giving them too much love.

Who has inspired your career the most? This is 100 per cent my grandad. It was because I spent so much time in the garden with my grandparents as a child, that I developed an interest in gardening at a young age, which has always been with me and led to my career change.

What did you do before? Prior to moving into horticulture, I was a secondary school music teacher. During school breaks I was taking part in more and more volunteering holidays with the National Trust for Scotland, my houseplant collection was multiplying, and it became apparent that I was a much happier person working with plants.

Horticultural heroes Carol Klein has such an infectious enthusiasm and I share her love of propagation. I am also hugely inspired by the environmentalist Summer Rayne Oakes, who works to persuade people to reconnect with nature – and has filled her New York apartment with hundreds of houseplants. I was super lucky to be able to attend her book signing in London in 2019.

Most valuable training My recent two years on the Historic and Botanic Gardens Training Programme at Audley End House and Gardens has been a great experience. The opportunity to work full time alongside an inspirational garden team, to experience the seasonal requirements of the role, and complete projects, which I have been able to see realised within the garden, gave me such confidence to move forward with my career.

Dream plant destination Tropical glasshouses are my favourite part of any botanic garden and I have always wanted to travel to a rainforest. It would be amazing to experience these tropical plants in their natural habitat, so Costa Rica, Sri Lanka, and Columbia are all on my wish list.

One easy thing every gardener can do to be more sustainable Peat-free compost is an easy change. It is slightly more expensive but readily available, and even if gardeners swap out just some of their peat-based media for a peat-free mix, it all adds up.

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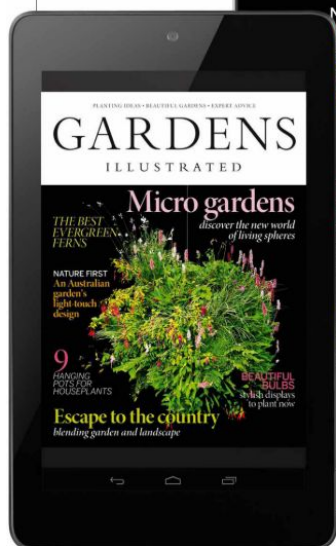


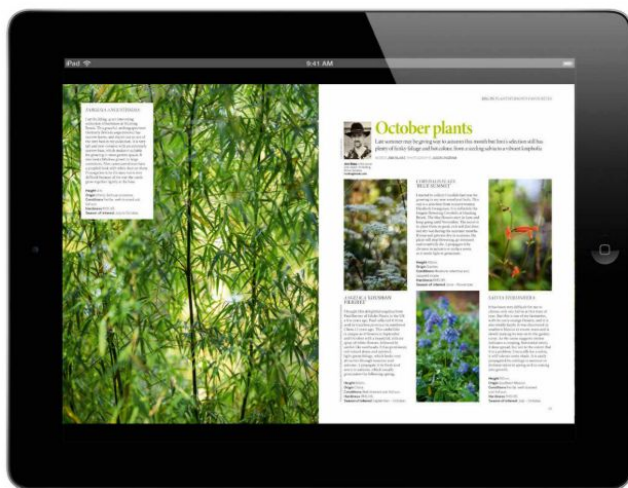
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Stately splendour

Steeped in history and enveloped in woodland, Parcevall Hall Gardens in the Yorkshire Dales are a gardener's delight

WORDS JOHN GRIMSHAW PHOTOGRAPHS CLAIRE TAKACS



IN BRIEF

Name Parcevall Hall Gardens.

What Country-house garden.

Where North Yorkshire.

Size 24 acres.

Soil Alkaline loam over limestone.

Climate Temperate, but the upland

conditions bring higher-than-

average rainfall, cooler

summers and colder winters.

Hardiness zone USDA 8.

Restored and expanded by
Sir William Milner in the late
1920s, Parcevall Hall sits above
a series of magnificent terraces;
a diverse shelterbelt gives
respite from the exposed climate
of the upper Yorkshire Dales.



On the approach to Parcevall Hall the lanes get progressively narrower, and there are some vicious bends. The hillsides around are rather bleak, the bare limestone exposed by centuries of clearance and grazing, but occasional glimpses over the stone walls show a patch of woodland plastered against the end of the valley. Distinctive in its colours, shapes and textures, it's obvious that this is no forestry plantation or relict ash wood.

When William Milner bought the largely 17th-century Parcevall Hall in 1927 it was in poor condition and stood exposed on the hillside. A man of means, Milner was heir to a baronetcy, but the ancestral house had been sold. He needed a home, and found it here.

A competent architect, Milner undertook the designs for the old hall and its surroundings himself, demonstrating considerable skill and sensitivity; the work supported many local builders and masons during difficult economic times. The old house had its back to the hillside, but the front faces almost due south down the valley of the Skyreholme Beck. Below the house Milner created a series of terraces within high walls to catch every ray of sunshine possible. This sequence remains the heart of the garden, beautifully crafted in local stone in a sort of 'muscular Arts and Crafts' style, and its elegant ruggedness is entirely appropriate for the majestic setting. The stonework is supplemented by tight hedging, adding another layer of shelter.

Beyond the terraces more walls and buildings define attractive spaces – the Chapel Garden, and a Rose Garden with fine gates and exquisite summerhouse. But Milner knew where formality had to stop. The Rock Garden is shaped into the living limestone, and above it the Cliff Walk leads through wildflowers to a viewpoint overlooking the spectacular scenery of Toller's Gill, once, now almost unimaginably, the site of extensive lead mining. The water for garden and community flows from the mouth of an old lead mine.

Above Steps made from local stone lead down from the 17th-century Parcevall Hall, now used a retreat house for the Diocese of Leeds, to the upper terrace with its pool surrounded by colourful planting. The statue at its centre recalls the biblical story of Jesus at the well of Samaria.

Right above The North Yorkshire Champion *Magnolia acuminata* (its girth of 155cm is the county's largest) forms a dome of yellow foliage above the quiet, grey terracing; from eastern North America, and usually enjoying hot summers, it demonstrates yew hedges how effective the shelterbelt is.

Right below Milner's beautifully designed terraces, with their strong elegance, are complemented by tightly clipped yew hedges and perfectly trained wall shrubs.

To continue turn to page 43 ►



A sequence of terraces within high walls catches every ray of sunshine possible and remains the heart of the garden



Beautifully crafted in local stone in a sort of 'muscular Arts and Crafts' style, the garden's rugged elegance is entirely appropriate for the majestic setting





As autumn progresses
Parcevall Hall becomes
enriched by the golden
folliage of the trees around
it, picked up on the terraces
by late-flowering *Helianthus*.





Milner knew where formality had to stop. The Rock Garden is shaped into the living limestone

▷ Shelter is the critical need here at around 210m, and a belt of robustly hardy trees to surround the 24-acre garden site must have been an early planting. The central garden space was also generously – Phill Nelson, the head gardener, would say “far too densely” – planted with a range of conifers and deciduous trees, giving that richness of effect seen on arrival. Described as a gentle giant, standing at six feet, seven inches, a devout Christian and naturally somewhat reticent, Sir William Milner was nevertheless extremely well connected. Queen Mary was his godmother and he had no trouble procuring good plants, many of which had been newly introduced from China, from his friends. Carefully planted and left to their own devices, the new specimens flourished; a survey by the Tree Register in 2021 recorded 14 county or national champion trees in the garden. One is a magnificent paperbark maple (*Acer griseum*), by far the tallest in North Yorkshire at 12.5m, and its girth of almost 2m makes it the stoutest in England. Always beautiful, its autumn reds and coppers show up to great effect in front of the gold of the nearby katsura (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum*).

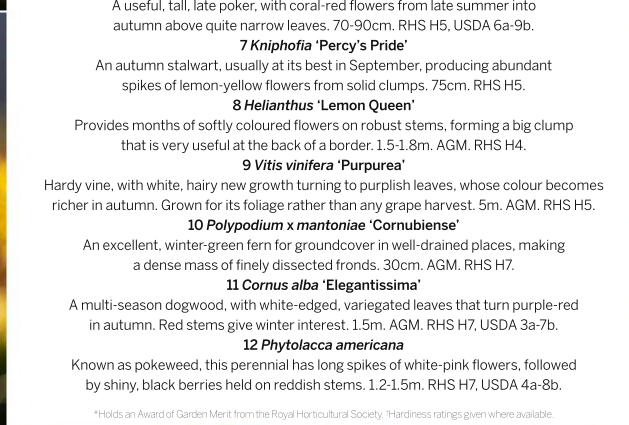
How Sir William thought the garden would look once the shelterbelt grew up is unknown, but the change is illustrated by a tale told by Phill: an old woman who had known the (more exposed) garden in her youth was brought to visit, but refused to believe she was at Parcevall Hall, so completely changed was the landscape. Phill has been head gardener for 32 years and has been largely responsible for the garden's reclamation from 25 years of neglect following Milner's death in 1960. “We just do a bit when we can,” he says, showing a pool and waterfall rescued from oblivion some years ago, “but now we need to dredge it again.” The budget is tenuous but is made to go a long way by the dedication, hard work and horticultural intelligence of Phill and his assistant Nick Smith, who has himself been at Parcevall Hall for 22 years.

It is unusual to see a garden so immaculately maintained by just two men – the terrace lawns velvety, hedges precision-clipped and shrubs perfectly trained to the walls, offsetting a fine selection of perennials chosen for their seasonal highlights. Although ▷

Above Native limestone unifies the garden at Parcevall Hall, through its use in the terraces to the Rock Garden, where the stone provides the structure. A Japanese maple flaunts in the background.

Left above The arrival space outside the main door to the hall is dominated by a wall of native limestone, spangled with the autumn red of the stonewort *Phedimus kamtschaticus*.

Left below The Chapel Garden is a shaded, contemplative space, filled with good foliage plants such as *Rheum palmatum* (centre) while an *Acer davidii* ‘Ernest Willson’ at the back provides interest all year.



12 KEY PLANTS

1 *Gentiana asclepiadea*

Willow gentian gets its name from its arching shoots, which carry bright-blue bells late into the season. Thrives in moist soil and light shade. 50-80cm. AGM*. RHS H5†.

2 *Euonymus alatus*

Provides some of the brightest and most reliable autumn reds on a compact shrub – especially in full sun. 1.5m. RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.

3 *Monarda* 'Cambridge Scarlet'

A long season of bright-red flowers makes this a really useful component of the Red Borders at Parcevall Hall. It spreads gently to form a healthy clump. 1.2m. RHS H4.

4 *Hylotelephium spectabile* 'Brilliant'

Dense clumps of fleshy shoots bear flat heads of chalky pink flowers beloved by late bees and butterflies. Best in full sun. 40cm. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 3a-9b.

5 *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Kleine Fontäne'

One of the smaller clones, with lovely, silver-veined leaves and reddish plumes that become silvery as they age. 1-1.5m. AGM. RHS H6.

6 *Kniphofia* 'Nancy's Red'

A useful, tall, late poker, with coral-red flowers from late summer into autumn above quite narrow leaves. 70-90cm. RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.

7 *Kniphofia* 'Percy's Pride'

An autumn stalwart, usually at its best in September, producing abundant spikes of lemon-yellow flowers from solid clumps. 75cm. RHS H5.

8 *Helianthus* 'Lemon Queen'

Provides months of softly coloured flowers on robust stems, forming a big clump that is very useful at the back of a border. 1.5-1.8m. AGM. RHS H4.

9 *Vitis vinifera* 'Purpurea'

Hardy vine, with white, hairy new growth turning to purplish leaves, whose colour becomes richer in autumn. Grown for its foliage rather than any grape harvest. 5m. AGM. RHS H5.

10 *Polypodium x mantoniae* 'Cornubiense'

An excellent, winter-green fern for groundcover in well-drained places, making a dense mass of finely dissected fronds. 30cm. AGM. RHS H7.

11 *Cornus alba* 'Elegantissima'

A multi-season dogwood, with white-edged, variegated leaves that turn purple-red in autumn. Red stems give winter interest. 1.5m. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 3a-7b.

12 *Phytolacca americana*

Known as pokeweed, this perennial has long spikes of white-pink flowers, followed by shiny, black berries held on reddish stems. 1.2-1.5m. RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. †Hardiness ratings given where available.

▷ the revenue from more visitors would be welcome, the fewer than 10,000 who reach Parcevall each year leave a light footprint.

Winter can be dark, with the sun only making it over the high ridge to the east by late morning, but in spring the garden is full of daffodils and other bulbs, transitioning into summer richness exemplified by the fragrance of the rose garden. By late summer and into the autumn, the Red Borders stretching below the terraces reach their peak, and on the terraces long beds of *Nerine bowdenii*, agapanthus and hardy fuchsias provide continued floral colour as the season fades. Beyond the garden the hillsides change colour yet again, summer purple heather fading to bronze bracken and yellow birch, the whole flaring into brilliance as the setting sun lights up the crags of nearby outcrop Simon's Seat. □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address Parcevall Hall, Skyreholme, nr Appletreewick, North Yorkshire BD23 6DE.

Tel 01756 720311. **Web** parcevallhallgardens.co.uk

Open The garden is open daily from 1 April to 31 October, 10am-6pm (last admittance 4pm).

Parcevall Hall is closed to the public and used as a retreat house for the Diocese of Leeds.

Across the valley to the east is the hill known as Simon's Seat, which provides a constantly changing, wild backdrop to the beautifully created and maintained gardens of Parcevall Hall.

By late summer, the Red Borders reach their peak, and long beds of agapanthus and hardy fuchsias provide continued floral colour





IN BRIEF

Name La Queurie.

What An informal garden set around a 15th-century French manor house,

incorporating an innovative water-treatment system.

Where Normandy, France.

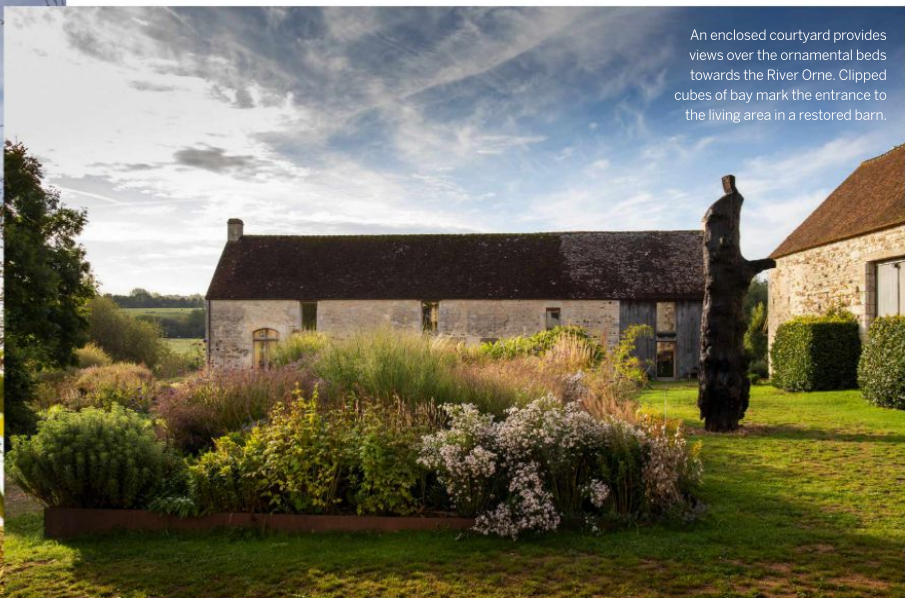
Size 34 acres.

Soil Slightly acidic clay.

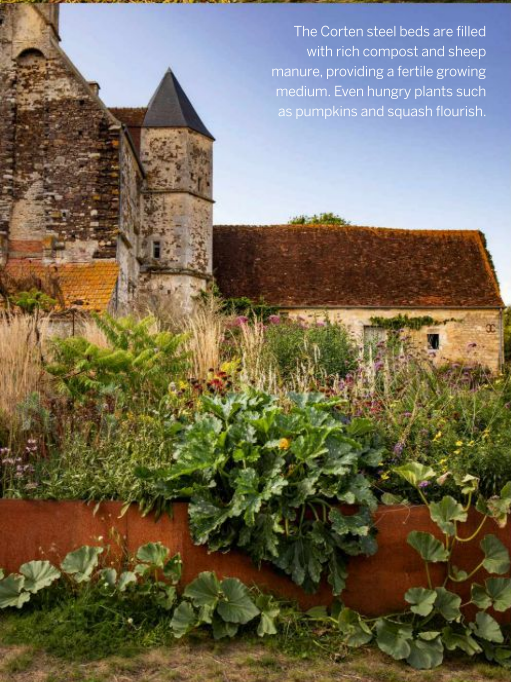
Climate Mild springs and summers with higher-than-average rainfall and cold winters.

Hardiness zone USDA 9.

At the rear of the manor's buildings, beech hedges enclose a vegetable and cutting garden where plants are encouraged to spread and seed themselves around. Here *Miscanthus*, Japanese anemones and *Cephalaria* combine to form a luxuriant mass.



An enclosed courtyard provides views over the ornamental beds towards the River Orne. Clipped cubes of bay mark the entrance to the living area in a restored barn.



The Corten steel beds are filled with rich compost and sheep manure, providing a fertile growing medium. Even hungry plants such as pumpkins and squash flourish.



HARMONY RESTORED

From impoverished farmland to thriving estate, a Normandy garden, revived with panache, flows effortlessly into its splendid surroundings

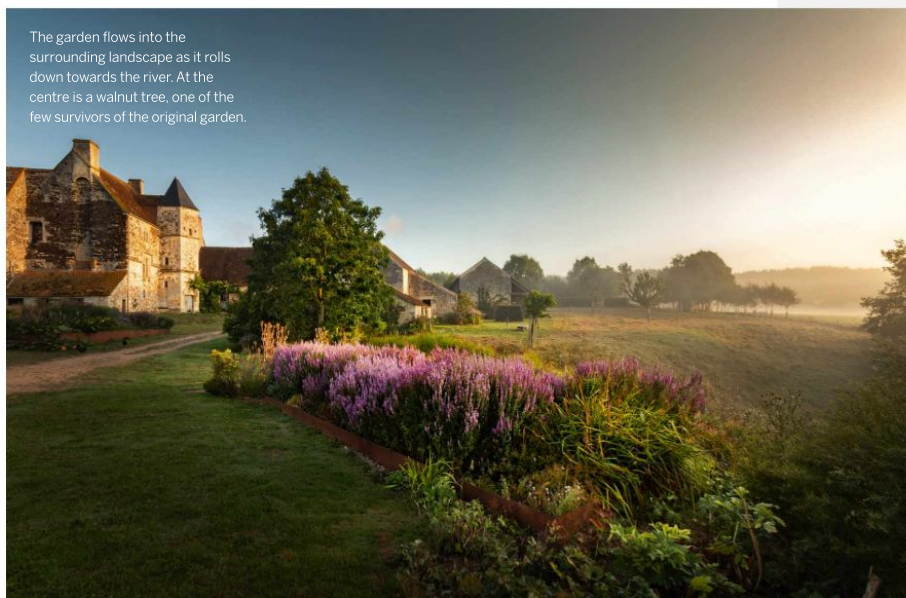
WORDS JOHN HOYLAND PHOTOGRAPHS SIBYLLE PIETREK

For Thekla Benevello the most important aspect of her garden is the landscape in which it sits. “The environment and the views are stunning – they don’t need embellishment,” she says. “I want the garden around the house to open into the landscape and to merge seamlessly with it.”

Thekla’s home in southern Normandy, France, is a collection of the stone buildings – some renovated, some still ruins – of a manor house that dates from the 15th century. The site is on high ground overlooking rolling hills and fertile valleys, next to the River Orne, which meanders back and forth on itself to create small almost-islands in the lush landscape.

The first job to be tackled when the property was acquired in 2007 was to reinstate the hedgerows and replant the trees that had been sacrificed to the demands of intensive farming. “The land was previously home to 200 cows. There were no hedges, hardly any trees, save for a large walnut close to the barns, and the ground was heavily compacted,” explains Thekla. “And there was no wildlife. You never could hear birdsong.” ▸

The garden flows into the surrounding landscape as it rolls down towards the river. At the centre is a walnut tree, one of the few survivors of the original garden.



The courtyard is full of 12m-wide, Corten steel beds that are packed with plants and have a hidden role as water-treatment facilities

▷ The hedges she planted, over a mile of them in total, are a mixture of native plants that grow well in the area and that also provide food and shelter to small mammals and birds. Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), hawthorn (*Crataegus laevigata* and *C. monogyna*) and wild cherry (*Prunus avium*) form the backbone of the hedges and are interspersed with dog roses and honeysuckles.

Being close to the river, the soil is often wet and the high rainfall of the area means that waterlogging can occur. Thekla has planted copses of white willow (*Salix alba*), which thrive on the damp soil and take up lots of moisture. She has restored the *chemin creux*, a sunken track that's traditional in parts of France with high water tables, which in winter takes water away from the surrounding fields. Thekla has lined the top of hers with ash and wild cherry and created a pond at the end of it where excess water collects. In the short time since Thekla started replanting the landscape, wild animals have returned and the air is now filled with birdsong.

The area is a cider-making region and Thekla has created an orchard with around 60 cider-apple trees, all old cultivars that are becoming rare. The meadow around the trees is grazed by a small flock of sheep.

Ornamental plants are confined to the courtyard built around the former stables and a cider-pressing barn that has been converted for B&B guests. The area is dominated by 12m-wide beds edged in Corten steel that are packed with plants and have a hidden role as water-treatment facilities. Waste water from the house passes through the beds and is cleaned by bacteria that live around the roots of the plants. "The beds have a utilitarian, ecological purpose, but I also wanted them to be beautiful," says Thekla. ▷



Above A grapevine is left to romp informally along a stone wall and on to one of the buildings, creating a romantic, easy-going atmosphere. The stone steps are softened by *Persicaria*.

Right, from left to right Plants are allowed to find their own home and self-seeding is encouraged. Here fennel snuggles comfortably against the warmth of a stone wall. *Verbena bonariensis* presides over other plants in one of the steel-edged beds. Plants are left to their own devices and the following year another self-seeder may dominate, creating an annually changing tapestry of plants.

An area of the garden is dedicated to growing vegetables and cut flowers. Dahlias planted close together create an abundance of blooms that will be cut to make bouquets for the house.

One of several artworks in the garden by French sculptor Christian Lapie, who is renowned for his monumental pieces in scorched wood.



Billowing clumps of purple loosestrife roll through the water-treatment beds, punctuated by the skeletons of teasel. Plants self-seed happily, spilling from steel surrounds.





Miscanthus, Eupatorium and Ligularia revel in the rich, moist soil, forming sturdy plants. A fence protects them from the sheep and hens that share the garden.



Above Hydrangeas, dahlias, asters and self-seeded annuals spill from their beds and provide an exuberant counterpoint to the austerity of the manor's stone buildings.

Left, from left to right

One of the many cider-apple trees planted by Thekla. All are old cultivars local to the area. Tree guards have to be used to protect the bark from the sheep that graze the orchard.

Hawthorn (*Crataegus laevigata*) is a major element of the hedgerows planted around the garden. Its berries are an important food source for birds during autumn and winter.

Pear and other fruit trees have been trained as espaliers in traditional shapes. The shape here is known as Palmette U Double. Originally conceived to maximise crops, this type of pruning is now mainly used decoratively.

I allow the plants to find their own balance. The garden changes every year and plants travel around. It feels very much alive

▷ One of the beds is filled with reeds (*Phragmites australis*), commonly used in water-treatment systems. In the others, Thekla has experimented with more colourful plants, predominantly forms of purple loosestrife (*Lythrum virgatum* and *L. salicaria*) and *Iris pseudacorus*. These are both native plants that hug banks of streams and rivers so are ideally suited to the growing conditions and provide a link to the wildflowers beyond the garden.

The soil in the beds is enriched with compost and sheep manure resulting in a fertile home for many plants. *Miscanthus*, monardas, veronicastrums and vegetables grow cheek by jowl in an exuberant miscellany. "I allow the plants to find their own balance. The strongest ones survive," says Thekla. "The garden changes every year and plants travel around. One year *Verbena bonariensis* seeds itself everywhere and the next year the teasel. It feels very much alive."

Skirting the buildings, to soften the stonework, are hydrangeas, self-seeded fennel and an array of perennials. "I often acquire plants as cuttings, not knowing what they are. If they survive, they stay." The entrance to the main barn is marked with tightly clipped buttresses of bay (*Laurus nobilis*), and at the rear of the building beech hedges enclose a vegetable and cut-flower garden. The overall atmosphere is informal and relaxed, with plants allowed to grow wherever they like. "I want this place to be respectful of nature and of the landscape," says Thekla. "This is my little corner of paradise." □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Thekla offers two rooms for B&B. La Queurie, 61150 La Courbe, France. Tel +33 (0)2 33 12 85 68, laqueurie.wordpress.com

Spring awakening

Taking time to coax a selection of choice bulbs to flower early will reap huge rewards in late winter when colour is in short supply. Gardener Jacky Mills shows how, with a little forward planning, pots of bulbs can be brought indoors to create beautiful displays to expel the winter blues

WORDS JACKY MILLS PHOTOGRAPHS JASON INGRAM





Each autumn I treat myself to a varied collection of bulbs so I can indulge my passion for experimenting with flowering combinations of indoor arrangements through the depths of winter. Many of these bulbs can be encouraged into early flowering by adapting techniques perfected by nurseries to manipulate plants to bloom out of season in a process known as forcing.

Bulbs are underground storage organs adapted to survive the annual winter chill until conditions for growth become favourable. Triggered by changes in day length and temperature, the biochemical systems controlling a bulb's growth can simply be tricked into an earlier start with a little shelter from the elements and some gentle bottom heat. Some, however, require an initial drop in temperature to complete their development. This cold spell, known as vernalisation, encourages good root formation, crucial to anchor the growing plant's maturing flowerhead. Although not required by all bulbs, a period of two to four months at 4°C is quite sufficient for those that do, and can be achieved by keeping the potted bulbs in an unheated shed or garage.

Using a predominantly loam-based, gritty compost, I grow all my bulbs for displays in pots (colour coded to cut down on labelling), which allows greater flexibility in catering for specific plant needs and protects them from slugs and rodents. These potted bulbs sit happily in an unheated greenhouse through the early winter until I decide to prompt them further with a little extra bottom heat if required. As they start to show signs of bud formation I transfer the growing plants to the display containers along with any other planting partners – any unused pots can be planted directly into the ground.

Narcissus romieuxii 'Julia Jane' (facing page)

The soft lemon-yellow flowers of this petticoat daffodil naturally start to flower as early as February outdoors but can be brought into bloom at least a fortnight earlier by providing a little gentle bottom heat as roots and shoots appear. I grew these bulbs in 9cm pots and then replanted them just before flowering into a small but heavy metal cauldron, flanked with pots of *Muehlenbeckia complexa* for a contrast in foliage. Petticoat daffodils also work well in wooden wine crates alongside *Carex brunnea*, which mirrors the leaf shape. After flowering, feed with a liquid seaweed, deadhead and plant out in the green (while still in leaf) in a sheltered spot. Alternatively, allow foliage to die down and dry the bulbs out before replanting the following autumn in fresh compost. 20cm. RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b¹.

Galanthus nivalis (above, right)

Snowdrops require up to four months of cold treatment to flower well but you can create a stunning indoor display by digging up congested clumps of *Galanthus nivalis* ready for dividing as they begin to appear outside, potting them up with just a little shelter from an unheated greenhouse. Bring indoors as the buds are about to break (too much heat will cause the stems to elongate) and place into decorative ceramic pots, top dressing with moss raked from the lawn. I have partnered them here with pots of *Thaumatococcus bipinnatifidum* 'Shangri-La' and some scented branches of *Sarcococca confusa*. Sprays of black-berried, glossy-green ivy foliage and a selection of potted ferns will make good companions and the snowdrops will last several days if kept cool. After flowering split the clumps and replant outside in the green. 10cm. AGM², RHS H5, USDA 3a-7b.

Turn the page for more spring bulb ideas ➤

¹Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. Hardiness ratings given where available.



The stems of *Fritillaria raddeana* gradually lengthen after the elegant, absinthe-washed blooms appear beneath a delightful spiky hairdo of leaf-like bracts

Fritillaria raddeana (above, left)

I love experimenting with combinations that might not be possible in a garden setting, but there are several things to consider when putting together an indoor arrangement. Will it stand alone or will it be part of a group? What can you partner it with? And should you concentrate on a single species or include a range of species from one genus in similar containers, or link plants purely by their form and colour? For the combinations shown on these pages, I have focused on a few choice examples from the genus *Fritillaria*, all of which make excellent candidates given the flexibility containers offer. The stems of *Fritillaria raddeana*, a dwarf crown imperial, gradually lengthen after the elegant, absinthe-washed blooms appear beneath a delightful spiky hairdo of leaf-like bracts. I planted five of these chunky bulbs into individual long-tom pots, growing them on in a polytunnel with no extra heat. Before they flowered, I replanted them in an old, rusted, army kit box along with three trailing ivy, *Hedera helix*. The big bulbs (shown above right) have a pungent scent and are best planted in a humus-rich loam at least twice their depth to aid anchorage, and on their sides to avoid rot from water collecting in their crowns. They are fully hardy, tolerant of both sun and dappled shade and will appreciate an annual potash feed. 45-60cm. RHS H7, USDA 5a-8b.

Fritillaria davisii (facing page)

This beautiful grassland species from Greece has bell-shaped, chocolate-brown tepals that are exquisitely tessellated internally. These markings are picked up by the textural working of the metallic container, which my mother made by indenting patterns into the copper sheeting. In the larger copper bowl behind, I replanted 50 bulbs of *Fritillaria uva-vulpis* prior to flowering as the recurved purple-brown and yellow tepals look much better when grown en masse. I started them off in small numbers in pots, covered in grit and a glass sheet to ward off mice and slugs, which I left on an unheated bench for a few weeks before gently introducing some bottom heat from a thermostatically controlled heat pad. Both species appreciate a dry rest in summer before being repotted in fresh gritty compost in late summer and given a good watering. Alternatively, plant out in the green in a sheltered spot. Plant stems grow by cell division and elongation and have a phototropic response to light by growing towards it, so it is important to provide good levels of light and turn the pots frequently to keep the stems upright and prevent etiolation. As neither of the display pots have drainage holes both have a layer of expanded clay pellets (Hydroleca) at their base to soak up excess moisture and are top dressed with grit for a neat finish. 15cm. RHS H4.





The scent and colour alone of
zingy, cerise *Hyacinthus orientalis*
'Woodstock' will raise the endorphins



Hyacinthus orientalis 'Woodstock' (facing page)

Colour-themed combinations create very successful displays, allowing a range of different species to be brought together in a single pot or group. Here the zingy, cerise *Hyacinthus orientalis* 'Woodstock' is the star of the show, partnered with the smaller (15cm) but similarly coloured *Crocus tommasinianus* 'Barr's Purple'. Traditionally, hyacinths are 'forced' into early flowering by putting the planted bulbs in a cool, darkened room for up to 12 weeks before bringing into the warmth and light to flower. Prepared hyacinths are available to buy that have already been treated in this way. For this selection I used three bulbs of the hyacinth – as the scent and colour alone will raise the endorphins. The crocus bulbs were potted up in multiples of fives and left in a darkened garage for a few months as crocuses need a cold treatment for 12 weeks to bloom, unless you can get hold of pre-chilled corms. Both species were planted together in a low, wide terracotta pan to balance the height of the hyacinths, along with two *Pilea libanensis*, a trailing houseplant with tiny, glaucous leaves and reddish stems to complement the rose-red flowers. This dominant colour is picked up in the adjacent group of *Iris* 'JS Dijt' nestled in an old, tarnished, cake tin and the whole group is neatly finished with some branches of *Prunus cerasifera* 'Nigra' in a matching hue. Cut early in bud, the stems of this flowering cherry plum will soon bloom indoors with extra heat. Many container-grown bulb displays will appreciate some support and natural, twiggy ones look best. Hazel, dogwoods, alder, willow, lime and birch all do well and, if cut fresh and placed in damp soil, will continue to grow, which can add a new dimension to the display. 30cm. RHS H4, USDA 4a-8b.



Iris 'Alida' (above, left)

A rusty old drawer rescued from a skip made a lovely base filled with the lapis lazuli-blue flowers of *Iris* 'Alida'. The bun moss was kindly provided by curious blackbirds dislodging it from our conservatory roof. Alternatively, a pale-blue or white cultivar such as 'Painted Lady' works well in a large, flat, circular galvanised tray underplanted with a carpet of apple-green *Soleirolia soleirolia*. Irises respond well to a cool period before introducing gentle bottom heat after the roots develop, and will flower longer in a cool room or conservatory avoiding direct sunlight. 15cm. RHS H7, USDA 4b-9b.

Crocus versicolor 'Picturatus' (above, right)

This white cultivar with narrow, purple stripes on the petals is partnered here with the pale *Anemone blanda* 'White Splendour' in a vintage, brass, fish-poaching pan. These come in varying sizes and lacking drainage holes are perfect for sinking pots directly on top of a layer of expanded clay pellets (Hydroleca), hiding their upper rims below a top layer of gravel. Additional plantings of the crocus in aged terracotta pots create a delightful grouping. Both species benefit from a chilling period of three to four months to flower well. 10cm.

Growing bulbs in this manner is a great way to build up your knowledge of a species' requirements while simultaneously adding to the plant collection in your garden. And, if like me you like to draw, these displays will offer you some inspiring source material during the cold winter months. If you would like to plant your own displays, look out for the increasing number of organic bulb companies that haven't used any neonicotinoids. But get your orders in quickly – most bulb companies work on a first-come-first-served basis.



Polypodium vulgare

The common polypody is unusual among ferns for its tolerance for high light levels. Where plenty of moisture is available, it may grow epiphytically on trees or logs, but is equally at home on land. It colonises by gently spreading rhizomes. 30cm. RHS H7+.

EVERGREEN FERNS

Seen as queens among foliage plants, evergreen ferns have infinitely variable frond forms and textures, and are invaluable in trickier spots in the garden

WORDS RORY DUSOIR

Ferns are an ancient group of plants loosely allied to horsetails and club mosses, the evolution of which followed quite closely behind the appearance of the first land plants. As such, their prevalence on the Earth's surface pre-dates that of flowering plants by two or three hundred million years.

However, humankind has a more ready affinity with flowering plants, which have latterly been more successful in colonising the globe and hold a dominant position in our economy and culture. The reproductive processes of flowering plants have long been more perspicuous and are quite firmly embedded in the human consciousness; most people when presented with a plant will immediately ask what its flowers look like. The rather more opaque reproductive system of ferns was an utter mystery to science until the late 18th century, when it was discovered that ferns use spores, not seed, to reproduce; their proliferation was attributed until then to a mysterious, magical process that involved catching seed as it fell at midnight on Midsummer's Eve.

The 'otherness' of ferns and the awareness that they cohabited the globe with dinosaurs lends them a unique cachet among gardeners, particularly those who value the long-lasting visual appeal of foliage plants. As well as offering a general uplifting sense of lushness, the frond forms of ferns are elegant and endlessly fascinating. The lack of flowers is easily compensated for by the dynamism of fern growth, with the dramatic unfurling of fronds often occurring in remarkable flushes in the spring.

Many hardy ferns are deciduous and will shed their fronds in autumn to settle into a winter dormancy. However, those select species that are capable of carrying their foliage unblemished through the winter hold a particular value to the gardener. Their verdant presence throughout the bleakest days of the year keeps spirits up and offers a useful foil to the earliest of spring bulbs, at a time when foliage is in extremely short supply. Just as the year-old foliage begins to look tired and shabby in the early spring, fresh growth erupts to replace it. The old growth may be neatly removed at this point or left to moulder away while the luxuriant new growth unfurls.

Perhaps the most bullet-proof of wintergreen ferns is the native *Polystichum setiferum* and its many cultivars, which offer a considerable variety of frond forms and textures. Its value is enhanced not only by the particular verdure of its appearance in winter but by its adaptability. It is among the most drought tolerant of ferns and is a lovely plant to combat the often overwhelming sense of desolation imposed by dry shade.

Dryopteris erythrosora is also somewhat drought tolerant once established, but if you can arrange a coolish spot with a steady supply of moisture it will reward you with especially luscious growth, which is remarkable for its flashy bronze tones, especially in its cultivar 'Brilliance'. After a dramatic eruption of growth in spring, frond production continues at a steadier pace throughout the growing season, leading to a pleasing, more subtle effect of variation in colour between fronds at different stages of growth.

The evocatively named hart's tongue fern (*Asplenium scolopendrium*) and maidenhair ferns (*Adiantum* spp.) offer contrastingly lovely deviations from what we might think of as a typical fern frond. *Asplenium scolopendrium* has a very glossy and entire frond, like a miniature, hardy version of the tropical bird's nest fern (*Asplenium nidus*), which is commonly grown as a houseplant. Maidenhair ferns are instantly recognisable by their elegant, scallop-shaped pinnae, which are spaced generously to create a light and airy effect. Their remarkable delicacy and grace belies their robust nature. If you give them decent drainage in the winter and don't allow them to dry out in summer, they will thrive. □

• Author Rory Duso is a Kew-trained gardener and garden writer. His recommendations for the best evergreen ferns can be found over the next five pages.

PLANT PROFILE

What Ferns are an important group of vascular, non-flowering plants, valued in gardens for their atmospheric and long-lasting foliage. Hardy evergreen ferns retain their foliage throughout winter in temperate regions, making their decorative contribution even more valuable. These ancient plants also have their own language, with their leaves known as fronds and the leaflets pinnae. Fern species are in the main instantly recognisable as a group, but somewhat harder to distinguish from one another. As a result, the specific common names are in general rather dry, with names such as soft shield fern and Korean rock fern.

Origins Ferns are global and exist in every climate zone. Hardy evergreens can be found in a variety of temperate regions.

Season Evergreen ferns are in display for 12 months of the year.

Size Varies from 20cm to 1.5m.

Conditions In general, ferns tend to prefer shady, reasonably well-drained conditions with a ready supply of moisture, although there are many individual exceptions to this.

Hardiness Variable. Ferns in this article range from RHS H3 to RHS H7, and are suitable for gardens in USDA zones 3a to 9b.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.

†Hardiness ratings given where available.



Asplenium scolopendrium

The hart's tongue fern, with its arching, bright-green fronds, is a ready coloniser of damp, shady spaces. It can survive on little light and I have witnessed it growing a couple of feet underground in narrow rock fissures in the Burren, County Clare, Ireland. 40cm. AGM*. RHS H6, USDA 5a-9b.

Asplenium trichomanes

The dainty maidenhair spleenwort is native to the UK but also has an unusually broad global distribution, encompassing much of Europe, Asia and the Americas. It is most at home on the north face of a stone wall. 20cm. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 5a-8b.



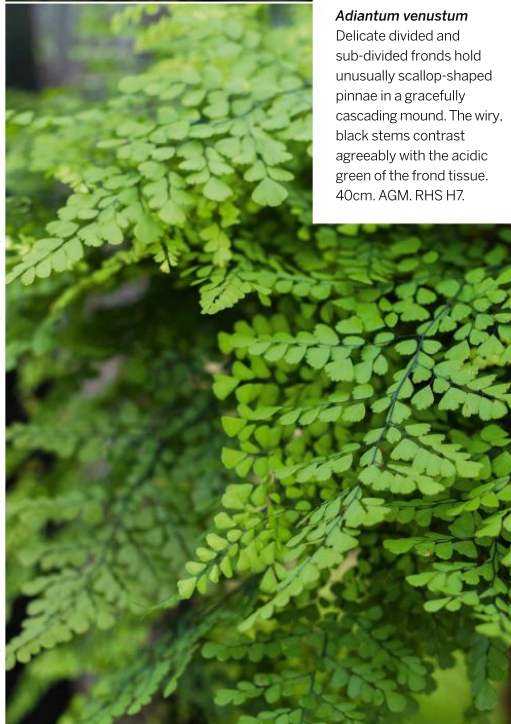
Arachniodes simplicior

An unusual-looking fern due to its spidery growth and variegation – pale-yellow blotches at the base of each pinna create the impression of zingy stripes. An established colony is quite a sight, 70cm. RHS H3, USDA 6a-9b.



Blechnum penna-marina

Forms a low-growing mat that becomes variegated in spring as fresh fronds unfurl in rufous tones above the dark, season-old foliage. Great for colonising nooks and crannies such as broad paving joints. 20cm. RHS H4.



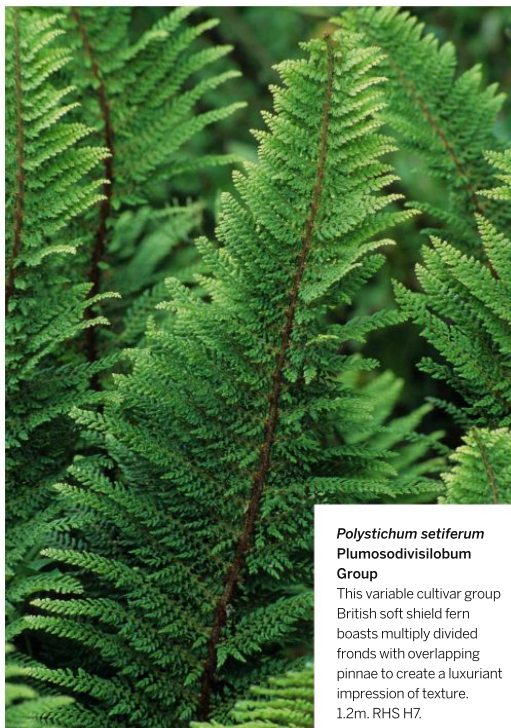
Adiantum venustum

Delicate divided and sub-divided fronds hold unusually scallop-shaped pinnae in a gracefully cascading mound. The wiry, black stems contrast agreeably with the acidic green of the frond tissue. 40cm. AGM. RHS H7.



Blechnum spicant

The so-called hard fern can look sombre at times, with its dark, leathery, sterile fronds carpeting the ground. But the emergence of upright, fertile fronds in spring provides spectacular relief. 50cm. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 5a-8b.



***Polystichum setiferum*
Plumosodivisilobum
Group**

This variable cultivar group British soft shield fern boasts multiply divided fronds with overlapping pinnae to create a luxuriant impression of texture. 1.2m. RHS H7.



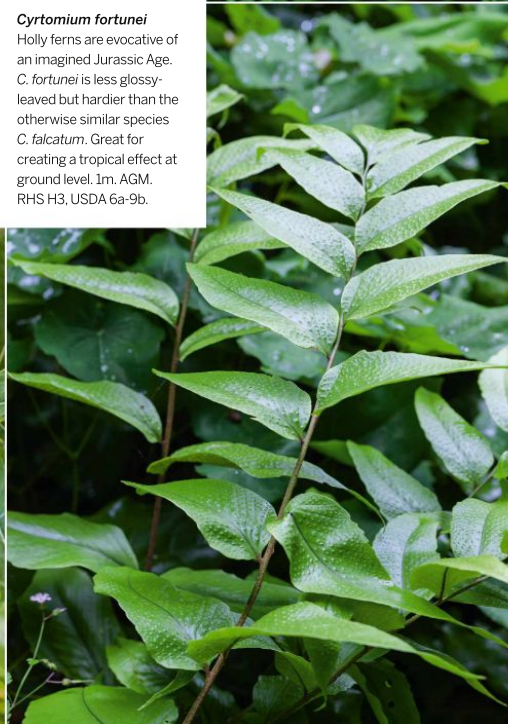
Dryopteris wallichiana

Has an imposing presence due to the size and disposition of its fronds as well as their dark midribs. Appreciates moisture and cool temperatures but can be fairly drought tolerant once established. 1m. AGM. RHS H5, USDA 6a-9b.



***Dryopteris erythrosora*
'Brilliance'**

The striking, bronze foliage of the copper shield fern is particularly marked in this cultivar. After a strong early flush, fresh fronds unfurl at a gentler pace through the growing season. 1m. AGM. RHS H5, USDA 5a-8b.



Cyrtomium fortunei

Holly ferns are evocative of an imagined Jurassic Age. *C. fortunei* is less glossy-leaved but harder than the otherwise similar species *C. falcatum*. Great for creating a tropical effect at ground level. 1m. AGM. RHS H3, USDA 6a-9b.



Woodwardia fimbriata

Native to western North America from British Columbia to Baja California. In warm, wet conditions its fronds are capable of growing more than 2m in length, but this is unlikely to be quite matched in the UK. 1.5m. AGM. RHS H3.

Blechnum cordatum

Creeping, rhizomatous fern with upright fronds, competitive enough to make an exclusive stand of hard-looking foliage. Once happily established, the fronds may grow to a remarkable height of up to 1.5m. AGM. RHS H4.



Cultivation

As a general rule, ferns prefer coolish, woodland conditions with plentiful moisture, humus-rich soil and a degree of shade, with some (such as *Asplenium scolopendrium*) tolerant of the very deepest shade. Individual species show varying levels of adaptability to variations from these norms. *Polystichum setiferum*, for instance, has a marked drought tolerance and *Polypodium vulgare* can tolerate full sun, so it is well worth experimenting to find the limits of each species under the climatic conditions to which your garden is subject. It should be noted that the durability of any fern will increase markedly once it is properly established, so a bit of patient cossetting in the first year or two may be required to see the best of a plant in any given situation.

One of the main assets of evergreen ferns is clearly the fact that they remain green and well presented throughout the winter, so you should not consider cutting them down until some point in the new year. Established clumps of ferns are good places to harbour naturalised colonies of bulbs, and the timing for cutting back may be somewhat dictated by the growth pattern of any companion plants. Bulbs that are early into growth, such as snowdrops and crocuses, may benefit from denudation of the ferns early in the new year to allow in more light. At any rate, removal of the old fronds will be a much easier job before the new croziers (or coiled, young fronds) begin to emerge as it is quite fiddly to avoid damaging them with your secateurs once they are upright. It's a good idea to monitor growth from February onwards to be sure of the best time to tackle this task. When it comes to large, naturalised colonies of ferns in an informal context, there is no need to cut back at all.

Propagation of ferns is simplest by division in spring. Some fern species, such as *Dryopteris wallichiana* and some cultivars of *Polystichum setiferum*, obligingly produce baby plantlets along their midribs. These can be encouraged to root by pinning a frond to a tray of moist compost and keeping it in shade in a propagator. Propagation by spores is the quickest way to bulk up your stock in large numbers. It is a magical but somewhat involved process that requires the would-be propagator to take great pains that the spores and growing medium are not contaminated. Malverleys' head gardener Matthew Reese explained this technique in some detail in *Gardens Illustrated* issue 292, which you can also find at gardensillustrated.com

Where to see and buy

- **Beth Chatto Plants and Gardens**
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Tel 01434 381372,
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Egham, Surrey TW20 0UJ.
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Tel 01539 560951,
nationaltrust.org.uk/sizergh
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IN BRIEF

What Private garden landscaped to negate the sloping terrain and planted for pollinators.

Where Berkshire.

Size A third of an acre.

Soil Chalk, greatly improved by mountains of compost.

Climate Temperate, sheltered by tall, dense hedges.

Hardiness zone USDA 8.

Joie de vivre

Making the most of natural light and acute angles, and using naturally inspired planting, designer Ann-Marie Powell has coaxed a vibrant garden full of colour and cheer from a reluctant, steeply sided plot in the Berkshire hills

WORDS JACKY HOBBS PHOTOGRAPHS RACHEL WARNE



When garden designer Ann-Marie Powell agreed to take on the planting aspect of this 'pre-landscaped', largely north-facing garden on the steep, upper reaches of Courtland's Hill, Pangbourne, she knew she had a real challenge on her hands. Notwithstanding the limitations of working with someone else's layout, the topography, aspect, soil and style meant she had to dig really deep to deliver a vivacious planting scheme that would "survive, soften and enliven the site, with trees and hedging helping to blur man-made dominance and shift the emphasis back to nature".

Landscape designers Artscape had previously dealt with the impossibility of the sloping site, and owners Nikki and Peter Sketch implemented plans for a series of stepped garden terraces to the rear and side of the house, each descending, or rising, according to the garden's topography.

The arrival is abrupt but immersive, a short, precipitous plunge from the lane to the house and south-facing front garden, steeply banked and concealed by hedging. The garden swings ►

Facing page Tall hedges of thick laurel, and lower, stepped yew enclose and define the vegetable, rill and sunken gardens. The pared-back, repeat planting links these areas to the wilder entrance garden.

Above Blocks of beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), softened by fountains of the grasses *Stipa lessingiana* and *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Ferner Osten' along with *Penstemon* 'Anderken an Friedrich Hahn' create a backdrop for the two black sculptures by Lily Sawtell.



Above

1 *Echinacea purpurea* 'Magnus' A large and long-flowering, radiant pink and orange-coned cultivar, which mixes better than most in prairie-style planting schemes. Best in full sun and free-draining soil, it will attract masses of butterflies and bees. 75cm. RHS H5, USDA 3a-8b*.

2 *Verbena rigida* A low-growing, self-seeding perennial that fills the lower decks with swathes of vibrant purple flowers, from summer through to autumn. Needs a well-drained, sheltered site, especially in winter as it is not fully hardy. 60cm. AGM*. RHS H3.

3 *Persicaria amplexicaulis* 'Alba' A really good clump-forming perennial with dazzling white flower spires that are rich in nectar and attract myriad pollinators. Plant in full sun or partial shade, in a well-drained position. 50cm-1m. RHS H7, USDA 4a-7b.

4 *Nerine bowdenii* 'Isabel' A great late-flowering bulb, and something of a secret weapon that will bring a pop of pink colour to the early autumn border. It loves full sun and free-draining soil. 50cm. AGM. RHS H5.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. Hardiness ratings given where available.



▷ through a deep-cut pathway round the western side of the house to a levelled dining space, down steps to lower-level vegetable garden and adjoining rill garden. Water issues from a geometric trio of pools via a clean-cut rill, which disappears through vegetation before dropping vertically down into the sunken lawn, the garden's lowest point.

Valiant efforts to self-plant the scheme failed to live up to Nikki's own high expectations for "an amazing garden, a jewel box of colour in every season, and a real haven for birds, butterflies and bees". Inspired by Ann-Marie's energetic, carefree and colourful style, she brought the designer in "to ramp up the planting and encourage pollinators".

The garden was indeed lacking a little something, admits Ann-Marie. Remodelling the entrance garden, which spills haplessly around the dining terrace, she "let in the swirling skirts of Mother Nature", introducing swathes of loose, naturally inspired planting, great wafts of grasses, jewel-coloured flowers and shrubs that "shone like stained glass windows". Realising that the steep banks and south-facing aspect brought magnificent back-lighting, she planted tiers of richly coloured shrubs and flowers that simply ▷

Above The tiered beds surrounding the dining terrace contain repeat plantings of *Cercis canadensis* 'Merlot' and beech blocks, interspersed with bleached grasses, *Stipa lessingiana*, *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Ferner Osten' and *Calamagrostis x acutiflora* 'Karl Foerster', and *Eupatorium fistulosum* f. *albidum* 'Ivory Towers'. The black, stone Pelican and Dolores Miranda sculptures are by Lily Sawtell.

There's no place for half-heartedness here; colours need to shine and plants must be upright – if they're not up to the job, they're out



Above The ornamental beehive in the rill garden is surrounded by laurel hedges, box balls (*Buxus sempervirens*), ornamental pear trees (*Pyrus calleryana* 'Chanticleer') and the grass *Stipa lessingiana*. The rich colours of *Penstemon* 'Andenken an Friedrich Hahn', *Helenium* 'Moerheim Beauty', *Verbena rigida* and *Geum* 'Prinses Juliana' stand out against fern *Polystichum setiferum* (Decompositum Group) 'Proliferum' in the beds.

► ignited. Playing with light added a completely new dimension, natural illumination enhancing the planting's brilliance and richness. The purple foliage of *Cercis canadensis* 'Merlot' has the ultimate glow factor, and is cleverly repeated across the bank alongside the radiant hues of burnt-orange *Helenium* 'Moerheim Beauty', ruby-red *Penstemon* 'Andenken an Friedrich Hahn' and *Betonica officinalis* 'Hummelo'. These strong, signature colours repeat with the seasons, reinforced by Ann-Marie's secret weapon, "an entire, underground city of bulbs"; an immense, autumn uprising of fuchsia-pink *Nerine bowdenii* 'Isabel' follows a kaleidoscope of spring tulips in orange, magenta and purple. Nikki buys into this 'go big or go home' approach: "There's no place for half-heartedness here; colours need to shine and plants must be upright, robust and tolerant of the free-draining chalk soil. If they're not up to the job, they're out."

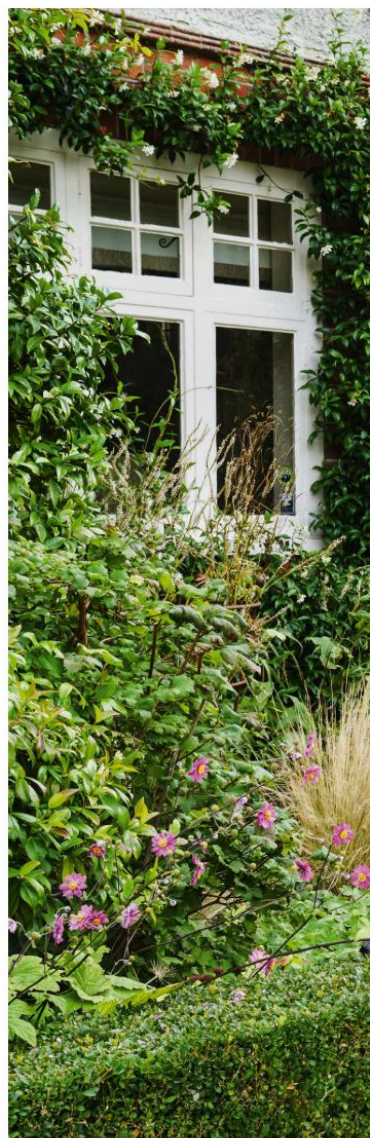
Illumination, rather than colour-change foliage, is the main focus of autumn plantings, but the introduction of "fantastic beech cubes" (*Fagus sylvatica*) not only "helps anchor and give structure to the slope, they colour up brilliantly in autumn". For Nikki, the beech blocks have been a "complete revelation", and she is delighted that so many birds have nested in them.



Next up, big grasses – “Yes, even in a relatively small garden,” enthuses Ann-Marie. “They bring excitement, movement and sparkle. When I’m designing, it’s all about the volume of swish. I turn it up in the wilder areas and restrain it in more formal parts.” This helps to differentiate and retain the individual identity of each garden compartment. Moving eastwards, away from the more naturalistic, flower-filled, ‘Wild West’ of the garden – which, admits Nikki, borders on chaos – colour and grasses are dialled down, while evergreen structure, hedges, lawns and trees take precedence. “It’s logical that the quietest, greenest, more formal space – the sunken garden – be tucked away at the garden’s deep end.”

Midway, the rill garden introduces an exciting new element – water. Tousled grasses, ferns and strands of floriferous colour are pinned right back, secured by four upright fruit trees and a variety of box balls, to reveal a broad, rectangular lawn inlaid with a stone-edged water feature and rill. Water brings sound and movement to the tranquil space, before plunging down through infinity borders, disappearing into the sunken garden below. Not ones for fads and fashions, Ann-Marie and Nikki settled on a replica of a Chelsea show garden ornamental beehive to create a focal point, an apt nod ►

Above A row of *Pyrus calleryana* ‘Chanticleer’, in large, verdigris, bell-jar planters from Capital Garden Products, create a decorative screen in the Sunken Garden. These ornamental pears offer structure, spring blossom and warm autumn colour, and underplanted with *Echinacea purpurea* ‘Magnus’, *Geranium macrorrhizum* ‘Bevan’s Variety’ and the grass *Anemanthella lessouaniana*, they add year-round interest to an otherwise lacklustre wall of laurel.



Above

5 *Penstemon* 'Andenken an Friedrich Hahn' Brilliant, jewel-coloured, foxglove-like flowers bring a real glow factor to the late-summer garden. Make sure conditions are sheltered and well drained to ensure plants survive especially cold winters. 60cm. AGM. RHS H5.

6 *Anemone hupehensis* var. *japonica* 'Pamina' Bears tepal-packed rings of long-lasting, deep-pink, double flowers, which bring height and splashes of colour to late summer and early autumn borders. Fully hardy, great in sun or shade. 1m. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 5a-8b.

7 *Dahlia* 'Totally Tangerine' A lovely, anemone-centred, orange-pink dahlia with a ruffled centre and radiating petals. The flowers bloom well into autumn and, with their sturdy stems, they are good for cutting too. 80cm. RHS H3.

8 *Oenothera lindheimeri* Gaudi Red (= 'Florgaured') Brings a gleam to late-summer beds with wands of bright-pink flowers on red stems, which are held above lance-like, dark-green, foliage. Good for front of a border and as groundcover in a well-drained, sunny site. 30cm. RHS H4, USDA 5a-9b.



▷ to the garden's increased biodiversity. The hive is framed with coiffed, golden grass *Stipa lessingiana*, which Nikki tidies with a hairbrush, a trick Ann-Marie has stolen from her client.

The adjoining vegetable garden is Nikki's design and domain. The glasshouse reflects the style of the house, and raised beds (three dedicated to permanent soft fruit, rhubarb, asparagus and perennial herbs, with crops rotated in another four) overcome issues of planting in chalk. "I love experimenting with unusual varieties, and giving away surplus, home-grown produce with a zero-carbon footprint," says Nikki.

The influx of pollinating insects, butterflies, bees and birds, generated by Ann-Marie's naturalistic touch, has done much more than bring prosperity to the vegetable plot. "The entire garden is alive and energised," reveals Nikki. Ann-Marie is also content: "If I can improve my client's life by creating a garden brimming with nature, my job is done." □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Find out more about Ann-Marie's work at ann-mariepowell.com

Above Ann-Marie softened the existing hard landscaping, engulfing the steep slope with tall plants and grasses able to withstand the bank's dry conditions. *Eupatorium fistulosum* f. *albidum* 'Ivory Towers', *Calamagrostis x acutiflora* 'Karl Foerster' and *Persicaria amplexicaulis* 'Alba' help to blur the rigidity of the pre-existing boundary yew hedge. The soft textural grass *Stipa lessingiana* and airy *Anemone hupehensis* var. *japonica* 'Pamina' ruffle up the 'neat and tidy' box.

LYNNE MARCUS

The chair of the Society of Garden Designers on making a change of career, the challenge of fitting the pieces of garden design together and the unpardonable crime of laying fake grass

WORDS ANNIE GATTI PORTRAIT CHARLIE HOPKINSON

Like many members of the Society of Garden Designers (SGD), Lynne Marcus, who became chair of the society in September 2020, came to garden design as a career change. After a degree in politics and sociology she went into manpower planning and research and then moved to human resources, becoming director of HR for a leading firm of accountants in the City of London. When she took a break to have her two children, she realised that she didn't want to return to corporate life. Having time to appreciate her garden for the first time, she turned her attention to plants and with a friend started up a company providing container gardens, mainly for restaurants. Requests to do local front gardens followed and she was hooked. A correspondence course with Professor David Stevens on the Principles of Garden Design gave her the confidence to start her own design studio in 2004, and has guided her approach to gardens ever since. "It always comes down to the absolute fundamentals of garden design, and that's what the SGD is about too. The starting point for me is the relationship between the building and the landscape (I use the word landscape broadly). All lines are always taken from the house – windows, doors, the corners of the house, you should always find a line to hang your design on. To me every line is important and it doesn't matter if it's rectilinear or curvilinear."

Today Lynne mainly designs city gardens of different sizes and in different situations, with some larger country gardens. "I like the jigsaw of it all," she explains, "the challenge of it. Flat gardens are nice to do but levels are really where it's all at, to me." She feels that designers often forget to credit their clients who are usually so open to suggestions. "They have a feeling of what they love but they don't have a clue how to get there. The clever bit of being a garden designer is listening closely and working out what it is that the client wants."

Lynne's clients will certainly be offered sustainable options for the various elements of the designs she proposes, as sustainability is critical to all her work. There are the key issues, such as water usage and storage, low maintenance and 'right plant, right place' planting, and reduction of concrete and other non-permeable surfaces, but the issue that perhaps exercises her most is what she calls "plastic lawn" – it's disingenuous, she says, to call it turf. "People who cover their back gardens in plastic should be ashamed of themselves," she says passionately. "They can't get a plastic bag in the shop but they're prepared to dig up 1,000 years of top soil and stick down a ghastly

base and cover the whole thing in plastic to make a no-go zone for anything that breathes or flies." She is pleased that the SGD no longer takes sponsorship from plastic lawn companies, and that the new specifications guide that the Society is preparing for its members will be state of the art, and include all the current sustainable alternatives.

Lynne joined the SGD in 2010 but didn't become a registered member until 2016. "I had a lull in work and took the bull by the horns to get the plans, drawings and documentation to go through adjudication." Four years later she was invited to become chair, her past experience on committees for education, training and recruitment no doubt influencing the Society's choice. As well as prioritising sustainability, she wants to see more young people entering the industry. "There is a huge skills gap. We are working with the Landscape Institute on its Choose Landscape programme. It's a big issue and we need to join together on this to have impact." On a personal level, she has clearly been influencing her son Matthew, 30, who has for many years been photographing her gardens, and over the past year has accompanied her on consultations, worked with her on designs and helped with planting. "He can start with me," she says "but he already has his own design style and I hope that he follows his own path."

Running her own business has meant that she has little time to look after the multi-level garden at her Arts and Crafts house in north London. "I've done things simplistically, to keep it low maintenance. There's structure from evergreens – from *Laurus nobilis*, herbs, lavender and parahebe close to the house and from *Pittosporum tenuifolium* 'Golf Ball' throughout the garden – and a waterlily pond overhung with *Betula pendula* 'Youngii' and *Cercis canadensis* 'Forest Pansy' lower down. I also have a network of small, white roses, which twinkle as they start flowering in May and create a framework through which everything else weaves. Recently, I've had my head down, working on a design and have only been looking at the garden from inside. The other day I took a break and walked down the garden to clear my head and I thought goodness, it's really quite nice." □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Find out more about the SGD at sgd.org.uk

A two-day SGD symposium on looking to the past to inform the future from a sustainability and climate-change perspective will take place at Denmans Garden, West Sussex, on 10-11 June 2022.

PEOPLE WHO
COVER THEIR
BACK GARDENS
IN PLASTIC
SHOULD BE
ASHAMED OF
THEMSELVES



A photograph of a lush garden scene. In the foreground, there are various plants, including a large purple-leafed plant on the left and a large green plant with broad leaves on the right. A gravel path is visible on the right side. In the background, there are tall trees and a clear sky.

Show stopper

With its dramatic foliage and punchy colours, Malverleys' Exotic Garden reaches its peak in autumn, providing one last show-stopping hurrah before head gardener Matthew Reese and his team ease the garden into winter

WORDS MATTHEW REESE PHOTOGRAPHS JASON INGRAM



IN BRIEF

What A new English flower garden with mixed border planting in a formal design, influenced by the writings of Christopher Lloyd, Vita Sackville-West and William Robinson.
Where Hampshire.
Size Ten acres.
Soil Variable, mostly stony acid loam with clay.
Climate Temperate. Sheltered from the west, but exposed (with views) to the east.
Hardiness zone USDA 9.

With the autumn equinox passed, the nights are longer, the days shorter and the weather in October is quite unpredictable. Storms are frequent, but it is also common to have long windows

of rich, mellow sunshine, much kinder on the garden than the searing summer sun that flattens everything into two dimensions. October is also kind to the gardener; it's too early to start hacking at the border and planting tulips, and too late in the season for major planting. It is a time to enjoy the garden and make plans.

At Malverleys, we work to keep the garden going into the depths of autumn, and the Exotic Garden is looking its best in this season. The drama is set using huge leaves and tropical-looking, late-summer bedding plants such as dahlias, cannas, begonias, ricinus and ipomoeas. The planting is lavish and extravagant, on the brink of becoming an impenetrable jungle with tall plants reaching out from the small beds and linking hands above the narrow paths. An excellent candidate for exotic planting is *Tetrapanax papyrifer*, with massive, coarse, deeply lobed leaves held on stiff, ascending petioles. It makes a suckering shrub or small tree and loses the lower leaves as it grows, creating a parasol effect with the vast leaves perched atop a naked stem. If foliage closer to the ground is preferable, it can be cut hard back in spring. Another tall plant synonymous with the tropics is the hardy banana, *Musa basjoo*. It produces suckering colonies with a large central plant surrounded by smaller pups, and has the perfect character for the space. The leaves spout tightly furled from the middle of the stems, then gradually relax into a funnel, and ultimately unfold to reveal a large, smooth banana leaf. Neighbouring these large, bold leaves is *Arundo donax*, an upright fountain of blue-grey, maize-like foliage, which looks striking next to the larger, broader shapes.

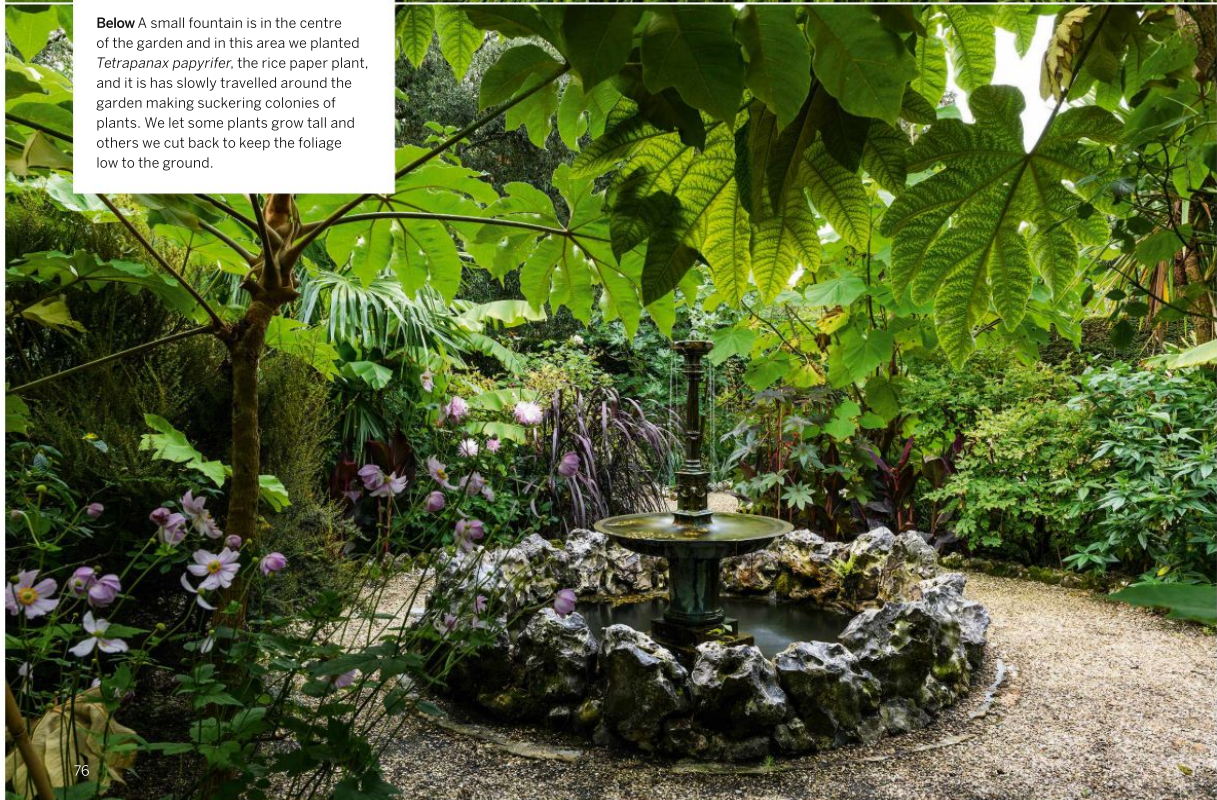
Big, exotic-looking foliage can be enhanced by coppicing and pollarding. The enthusiastic *Paulownia tomentosa* will produce huge, heart-shaped leaves and massive annual growth when pollarded to a stump in spring. From the stump, 12 shoots might develop and if nine are removed, all the growth is concentrated into the remaining three stems, giving supercharged results. The vertical stems can grow to 4m in a season and boast enormous leaves. *Catalpa* and *Populus lasiocarpa* can also be cut back to a framework to promote fresh vigorous regrowth. They will produce new stems to just over a metre in height, and consequently

To continue turn to page 81 ▶

Ringed by a yew hedge, the Exotic Garden is planted with lush, tropical-looking plants. Some, such as *Tetrapanax papyrifer*, are completely hardy while others, such as the trio in the centre – the yellow-flowering senna, the *Sparrmannia africana* and *Musa lasiocarpa* – are tender and imported into the garden from the greenhouse.



Above These flame borders are planted for late colour and here late-flowering perennials and autumn foliage combine. The good foliage of the *Kniphofia rooperi* carries it through for the summer and flowers are produced in October. Behind, *Euonymus alatus* 'Compactus' is on the turn, and the tall *Rudbeckia triloba* is in full bloom.



Below A small fountain is in the centre of the garden and in this area we planted *Tetrapanax papyrifer*, the rice paper plant, and it is has slowly travelled around the garden making suckering colonies of plants. We let some plants grow tall and others we cut back to keep the foliage low to the ground.



Above Foliage in its many shapes and shades is hugely important in the Exotic Garden. *Musa basjoo* projects massive, sail-like leaves, and the giant grass *Arundo donax* makes a wonderful contrast to the large leaves. In the foreground, *Dahlia* 'David Howard' has both good, dark foliage and punchy orange flowers.



Below In the Hot Garden, the *Koelreuteria paniculata* tree, which flowers in early August, has good autumn colour. Below *Sambucus racemosa* 'Plumosa Aurea' is pollarded to keep the foliage in the mid-zone above the *Phlox paniculata* 'Logan Black'. To the side *Rosa* The McCartney Rose (= 'Meizeli') is still producing pink blooms.



16 KEY PLANTS

1 *Persicaria amplexicaulis* 'Firetail' A long-flowering herbaceous perennial that makes mounds of tidy, green foliage with thin, branching stems that are topped with narrow spikes of bright-pink flowers. Prefers good, moist soil and will tolerate shade. 1m. RHS H7, USDA 4a-7b¹.

2 *Dahlia* 'David Howard' This tall, decorative type of dahlia has neat, double flowers in shades of tangerine. The flowers are held on strong stems above the dark-bronze foliage. Deadhead and feed to promote flower into the autumn. 1.5m. AGM². RHS H3.

3 *Euonymus alatus* 'Compactus' One of the best shrubs for reliable autumn colour, making intense, claret-coloured foliage in October. It does best in a sunny position and will thrive in moist soils. Also makes a good hedge. 1.4m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.

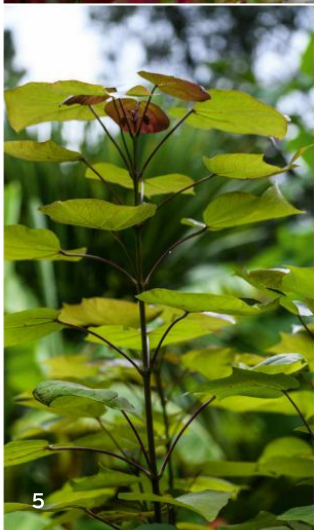
4 *Canna indica* 'Purpurea' A wonderful canna with dense thickets of dark-purple, paddle-like foliage and small, orange flowers. This is one of the strongest-growing and most reliable cannas and is quite hardy. Feed and water during the summer. 1.6m. RHS H3, USDA 7a-10b.

5 *Catalpa x erubescens* 'Purpurea' This purple form of the Indian bean tree can make a substantial tree, but in the garden it is best coppiced annually in winter to promote larger foliage and stronger purple colouring, and to keep it in context with the borders. 15m. AGM. RHS H6.

6 *Dahlia* 'Dutch Carnival' An extraordinarily strong and easy-to-grow dahlia. Large, double flowers are bright red and each petal is edged with a fine gold. Stake with a strong cane to keep them from collapsing in wind and rain. 1.4m. RHS H3.

7 *Rhus typhina* The stag's horn sumac makes a rangy shrub with thick, felty stems and pinnate foliage. It will travel slowly via suckers, but is generally quite well behaved. Cut back annually in the spring to promote strong fresh growth. 2m. RHS H6, USDA 3a-8b.

8 *Hedychium densiflorum* 'Assam Orange' A hardy perennial ginger for a woodland or shade garden. The smart, green foliage is held in upright ranks, and produced on top of each stem are slim spikes of waxy orange flowers with a spicy scent. 1.2m. RHS H3, USDA 8b-10b.





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9 *Tetrapanax papyrifer* One of the best hardy exotic foliage plants with large palmate leaves. This suckering shrub can make a small tree or be cut hard back in the spring to keep the foliage nearer ground level. 4m. AGM. RHS H4, USDA 8a-10b.

10 *Rudbeckia triloba* A tall biennial making masses of small, yellow, black-eyed daisies. Once established it can reliably self-seed through the garden. It may benefit from a little staking and looks wonderful combined with autumn hues. 2m. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 4a-8b.

11 *Ricinus communis* 'Carmencita' A good version with large, copper-red foliage and bristly red flowers. It is a fast-growing annual, best started in March under glass and kept moving, potting on when ready, until it is planted out in mid-May. 1.8m. AGM. RHS H2, USDA 9a-11.

12 *Canna* 'Wyoming' One of the best cannas for flowers, with large, flamboyant orange blooms held on stiff stems above dark-maroon foliage.

Cannas like living in moist soils and should be deadheaded regularly to keep the display tidy. 1.6m. AGM. RHS H3, USDA 7a-10b.

13 *Kniphofia rooperi* A late red-hot poker that makes squat poker flowers in shades of punchy orange and yellow, held above mounds of lively linear foliage. The blooms look wonderful combined with the plumes of pampas grass or autumnal reds. 1.6m. AGM. RHS H5, USDA 5a-9b.

14 *Senna corymbosa* This tender shrub produces fresh yellow flowers in loose panicles on the tips of the new growth. It is best overwintered in a frost-free greenhouse and bedded out in early May into good, fertile soil. 1m. RHS H1C.

15 *Dahlia* 'Karma Naomi' The Karma dahlias were bred for cutting, and so have strong stems and long-lasting flowers. Start from cuttings in February to get the strongest plants. Deadhead and feed to promote flowering into the autumn. 1.4m. RHS H3.

16 *Ricinus communis* 'Impala' A strong-growing bronze form with creamy-coloured flowers. It forms a tall plant decked in large, shiny, palmate leaves. It's at its most impressive when grown in fertile soil and in a warm, sheltered site. 1.8m. RHS H2, USDA 9a-11.



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16

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. *Hardiness ratings given where available.



Planting is lavish
and extravagant,
on the brink of
becoming an
impenetrable jungle
with tall plants
reaching out from
the small beds and
linking hands

▷ should be cut back to a taller frame than the paulownia so the foliage is not lost at ground level. This makes it easier to combine their shapes with dahlias or cannas. The poplar foliage looks wonderful in a breeze, wheeling around in a lively manner on long, thin petioles and contrasts well against the heavier, static elements in the garden.

The canopy lifts through the season and gaps appear, creating space for plants such as begonias and colocasias. Dahlias and cannas are bedded out in drifts in May near the edges of the paths and bring colour to the jungle of exotics. We use taller dahlias that flower at eye level and impose themselves on you as you push past along the paths, and the paddle-like foliage of the cannas looks lovely when backlit by the autumn sun.

The dahlias are staked to ensure they hold their own into October. Deadheading and feeding are imperative and will keep the show going. When the nights are reliably warmer in spring, we plant tender annual climbers, such as blue morning glories and *Ipomoea lobata* (Spanish flag), between the dahlias, cannas and shrubs to add more layers of interest to the garden. The display continues through much of October, and often into November, when it is dismantled and the tender elements are returned to the greenhouse for overwintering.

The Hot Garden wakes with tulips in spring and continues to shine through the summer, but also has a notable flurry in October. Many of the shrubs were planted for autumn colour and are paired with later-flowering perennials and bedding to produce vivid displays. These flame borders sit opposite each other and are surrounded by a tall yew hedge that affords the garden shelter from the October storms and is an excellent dark foil for the plants. This garden is heavy on shrubs and trees that function as anchors, against which we position seasonal flowers that are more transient. *Euonymus alatus* 'Compactus' is a cool green through the summer and superb in autumn when it turns a wonderful shade of claret red. It is exceptional in combination with the golden daisies of *Rudbeckia triloba*, or the magenta *Salvia curviflora*. At one end of the border *Nyssa sinensis* transforms into a burnt-orange full stop and looks excellent with *Rosa x odorata* 'Bengal Crimson' running through it. Editing out old plants to keep the garden fresh is as important as the new additions that bring colour and interest for late in the season. ▢

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address Malverleys Gardens, East End, Hampshire RG20 0AA. **Website** malverleys.co.uk

Open The garden is open by appointment to groups only. Admission £10. Please book online via the website.

At Malverleys we use big plants in the Exotic Garden to add to the feeling of drama that this style of planting inevitably brings. When you walk along the narrow, flint-edged paths, plants tower above you and reach out to almost block your way. As the canopy lifts, we underplant with shade-loving begonias and fuchsias.

Globetheatres

Designer Adam Shepherd has put the skills he uses to design living walls to create spectacular living spheres

WORDS HANNAH GARDNER PHOTOGRAPHS REBECCA BERNSTEIN



Moving around

One joy (and challenge) of these hanging spheres is the constant change of orientation. The sphere should ideally be placed to gently rotate in response to airflow. Pops of colour light up these otherworldly micro gardens. Adam frequently turns to fuchsias; their multi-hued flowers hang like jewel-coloured lanterns.

KEY PLANTS

1 *Anemone x hybrida* 'Robustissima' Saucer-shaped, pink flowers held on tall, crimson-stained stems from late summer. 1.2m. RHS H7*.
2 *Crococsmia x crocosmiiflora* A handsome perennial with erect, textured leaves and sprays of

fiery-orange flowers in late summer. 90cm. RHS H4.
3 *Fuchsia* 'Susan Travis' Originating in the mountain forests of South America, there are over 12,000 cultivars of hardy fuchsia to choose from. 60cm. RHS H6-7.
4 *Muehlenbeckia complexa* A fast-growing, wiry, trailing vine from New Zealand. Given moisture it

will grow anywhere; if it becomes leggy simply trim it back. 3m. RHS H3.
5 *Oxalis tetraphylla* 'Iron Cross' A bold, clump-forming, tuberous species with leaves that resemble those of a four-leaf clover, each with a dark-brown centre. Masses of brick-pink flowers in spring and summer. 15cm. RHS H4.



Before retraining at The English Gardening School, Adam worked as an art director. His spheres fuse his evolving love and knowledge of plants with his flair for practical construction and the good eye for framing a great picture he developed through training in photography and graphic design.

The fantastical, idiosyncratic gardening world of Adam Shepherd is discreetly nurtured within the walls and thick hedges of his sheltered, south Devon smallholding. Venture in though and on the veranda of his renovated farmhouse, you'll spot giant globes of luxuriant planting suspended from the beams. These living sculptures – perhaps that's the best way to describe them – slowly rotate in the gentle breeze and everything feels calm and serene.

As a London-based garden designer, Adam spent ten years creating sanctuaries for city clients. Initially he was drawn to the technical aspects of design and construction, building many of those first commissions himself. Growing in structural confidence, his portfolio soon included roof gardens and in seeking to use the many vertical planes of his mainly urban sites, he created his first green wall on a roof in Hackney in 2009. He cites the French living-wall maestro Patrick Blanc as a major influence. With the focus on texture and the requirement for a long season of interest, Adam reflects on his piqued interest in soft landscaping materials. "The love of plants is like a tidal wave," he says. "I am completely engulfed." His open-air, on-site nursery is a compact but organised affair, a compelling bright patchwork of unusual perennials, textural foliage plants (I keep spotting unusual species of *Persicaria*) and architectural shrubs such as *Fatsia japonica*. A large frame stands to the side of all the juvenile plants. I am reminded of a plein-air artist's easel with the paints laid out at his feet. The living walls and spheres are constructed here and later transported to clients having had a 'growing in' period of at least three months.

The first plant sphere was conceived three years ago. "It came as the result of a lightbulb moment after a long period of contemplation," says Adam. Ever the pioneer, he was ready for a ►



Wild world

This striking and very structural composition is one that is best placed in full light or partial shade but out of the scorch of direct sun. Like the previous sphere, it relies heavily on the clover-like *Oxalis tetraphylla* 'Iron Cross' but its base layer of mind-your-own-business (*Soleirolia soleirolii*) is extremely evident.

KEY PLANTS

1 *Cyperus rotundus* This low sedge with spiky, spherical, brick-red seeds and lime-green foliage is a prolific seeder. This one literally blew in. Requires sun. 30cm. RHS H3.
2 *Osteospermum jucundum* var. *compactum* A fast-spreading, half-hardy perennial with

narrow-leaved foliage. Compact habit when grown outdoors. Its attractive mauve flowers attract pollinators. 15cm. RHS H3.
3 *Osteospermum* 'Soprano White' This floriferous African daisy has a spreading, prostrate habit and crisp white blooms. Versatile and resilient, it thrives in

hot, dry conditions. 40cm. RHS H3.
4 *Soleirolia soleirolii* This fast-growing, creeping evergreen perennial has easily rooting pink or green stems and forms a soft mound bearing tiny rounded leaves and minute pastel-pink flowers in summer. 10cm. RHS H4.

5 *Verbena rigida* Also known as slender vervain, a perennial with clusters of fragrant, bright-purple flowers on rigid, branched stems. 60cm. AGM*. RHS H3, USDA 7a-11.
6 *Viola hederacea* A trailing, large-leaved, spreading viola with curious purple and white flowers. 50cm. RHS H8-9.



Easy watering

For this sphere the planting is held within a simple but ingenious steel cage designed by Adam and manufactured by a local Devon steelworker. A drip tray is discreetly held in place underneath, making watering possible over any surface and therefore more suitable for indoor spaces. As the sphere actually rests in the tray it can also re-absorb water from the reserve. Spheres can alternatively be hung over an area of planting or placed over a large bowl, the runoff from watering enjoyed as an integral part of the design. Taking his cue from his much larger living walls, Adam also runs irrigation lines to the spheres and nourishes them hydroponically to reduce watering commitments for busy or absent clients.

▷ more 3D challenge but was wrestling with the conundrum of what to use as a base object over which to wrap the fabric of his living walls. Not long after Adam had moved his young family to the coast the answer emerged and he started experimenting with marine buoys and fenders – “they are affordable, light, waterproof, have integrated hanging mechanisms and don’t disintegrate or deflate”. Adam now has a full portfolio of innovative work spheres, many over a metre in circumference. Having asked clients a few pivotal questions regarding strong colour preferences, avoidance of toxic plants if they have young children and the final positioning of the spheres, he finds most clients are happy to trust his expertise. His work is mostly commissioned by private individuals but he often works in conjunction with other garden designers and architects, most frequently with London-based John Davies, a fellow member of the Society of Garden Designers.

The plantings are long-term installations that “change with the season and develop over time”. The fabric component is a thick capillary matting that has a huge water-holding capacity, secured with stainless steel staples. The two layers support all the plant growth; they quickly ‘root in’ and colonise the space, and small amounts of additional compost are used only when smaller plant plugs form part of the composition. The key element is attention to detail and artistry. Plants are carefully selected for growth habit, colour and texture, the intimate underside of leaves and flowers being closely observed from below.

As I drive away, my car full of weird and wonderful plants, I notice tucked away near the gate a living chandelier – the scale of which would surely suit a grand atrium. I speculate that Adam, a man of endless creative possibilities, may be awaiting his first public commission. ▢

Turn the page for details of how to make your own sphere ▷



Rush of colour

Once again *Soleirolia soleirolii* forms an inconspicuous base while wispy *Oenothera* creates a playful atmosphere. Much of the vibrant planting is a textured tapestry of Japanese rush, ferns and late-season perennials. "I'm a sucker for *Persicaria*," admits Adam. "It's probably my favourite plant."

KEY PLANTS

1 *Acorus gramineus* 'Variegatus' An excellent, semi-evergreen rush. Eye-catching, tufted foliage is margined with creamy-yellow. 30cm. RHS H6.
2 *Fuchsia* 'Genii' A hardy cultivar with golden leaves and single, red and purple flowers that last from May to September. 1m. AGM. RHS H4.

3 *Persicaria affinis* 'Darjeeling Red' A semi-evergreen perennial forming a low-spreading mat of neat, green leaves that age to russet. Deep-magenta flower spikes appear in late summer. 25cm. RHS H7.
4 *Oenothera lindheimeri* 'Whirling Butterflies' Clouds of delicate, white flowers with long, white

stamens, opening from pink buds that flower from late spring to early autumn. 75cm. RHS H4, USDA 6a-10b.
5 *Polystichum setiferum* The evergreen, soft shield fern has dark, elegantly unfurling, lace-textured fronds that spread once open. Appreciates some shade. 1.2m. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 6a-8b.



How to create your own plant sphere

Closely wrap an initial layer of capillary fabric around your base (such as buoy or fender) and carefully staple your fabric to itself multiple times so it is snug and secure. Ensure the space for hanging is still accessible. The key detail is to use stainless steel staples to avoid rapid rusting. Next cut strips of matting at least the depth of your deepest plant module and long enough to wrap around the core several times. Attach the matting at one end and then place the plants between the base layer and the additional strip, stapling around the contours of the plant rootball to create pockets as you go. You may attach a number of plants and then cut the fabric, re-angle and continue. If you suspend your sphere at eye level while you are working on it, this will make this process much easier and allow you to have 360-degree access to your sphere.

Plants with a creeping and trailing habit, such as *Saxifraga* 'Ginkgo 98' (shown above, top left), are ideal as they knit together and quickly cover any visible fabric. It is important to stand back as you work and view from all angles, assessing how your planting scheme will develop over time, although edits are part of the fun and relatively straightforward. Once your sphere is planted up, you can tweak your design by trimming back any awkward protrusions and running your fingers through congested plants. If this all sounds too intimidating, you will be relieved to know that Adam is planning a series of workshops in his beautiful corner of south Devon for spring 2022. Contact Adam for details.

Find out more about Adam's work and contact details at tapestryverticalgardens.com

IN BRIEF

What Private garden overlooking the coast on the edge of the Point Nepean National Park on Victoria's Mornington Peninsula.
Where Near Melbourne, Australia.
Size Around two acres.
Soil Sand, very low in nutrients.
Climate Cold, wet winters with strong winds. Summer temperatures usually in the mid-high 30°Cs, often over 40°C.
Hardiness zone USDA 10b.

The garden Sam has created around this wood-clad, cantilevered building by architect Sean Godsell blends seamlessly into the National Park beyond. Sam often uses boulders in his work. This one, hugged by a cushion of seaberry saltbush (*Rhagodia candolleana*), marks the steep drop at the edge of the driveway.





LED BY THE LAND

Australian designer
Sam Cox has worked
with the surrounding
landscape to create this
extraordinary garden

WORDS NATASHA GOODFELLOW
PHOTOGRAPHS WILL SLATER



The southern point of the Mornington Peninsula outside Melbourne, Australia, is a landscape of two halves. The inner shore, on Port Phillip Bay, is calm and sheltered, a place of holiday makers and sun seekers. The outer coast is a different beast entirely. The site of former Australian prime minister Harold Holt's drowning in 1967, and bordering the infamous, shipwreck-strewn Bass Strait, this is a much harsher environment where storm-force, salt-laden winds can blow for days and where summer temperatures regularly top 40°C. It is, as landscape designer Sam Cox says, "a tough place to be a plant", meaning that plant selection for this garden, which sits high in the dunes there, was more vital than for most.

As in all his projects, Sam took his cues from the surrounding landscape – here the heathland of the Point Nepean National Park. "It was actually a really simple process," he says modestly. "So often there's the tendency to overcomplicate things or to try to be clever but my aim is always to strip things back and to connect with the spirit of a place, using nature as my guide. As soon as I stood at the edge of the building [designed by architect Sean Godsell] and looked out across the National Park to the coast – it was clear what we had to do. We just needed to emulate what was already here."

That said, the first phase was one of removal. Over the past few years, a South African weed, *Polygala myrtifolia*, has run amok in the dunes, out-competing native species and, with its lime-green tinge, completely altering the area's aesthetic. Sam persuaded the clients that it had to go and a team of three spent three weeks on their hands and knees, cutting the plants at their base and burning them. "It was a significant investment before we'd even started on site but the ►

Above Silver cushions of the aptly named cushion bush (*Leucophyta brownii*) punctuate the dense evergreen planting closest to the house. Their roots help stabilise the dunes beneath but as they grow their lower branches have a tendency to go brown, so careful pruning is required.

Right The arching trees in front of the house are coastal tea trees (*Leptospermum laevigatum*) with their textural, shedding bark and white flowers in spring. One trunk has been propped to maintain its sculptural shape. A dense covering of bark chippings acts as both a mulch and a winding, free-form pathway through the planting.

A photograph of a modern building with a dark, vertically-slatted facade and a curved roof. The building is set in a natural landscape with greenery and a gravel path. The text is overlaid on the building's facade.

Often there's the tendency to
overcomplicate things or
to try to be clever but my aim is
always to strip things back and
connect with the spirit of a place

Working without
a plan is complete freedom
as it allows the design
to evolve in response to
what the site needs





▷ clients really grasped the idea and ran with it,” says Sam. Happily, it had the desired effect. “As soon as it was gone, the tones in the landscape immediately shifted back to the soft greys the coast is known for.”

Winning the confidence of clients is important for all designers but absolutely crucial for Sam, who works with only the loosest of conceptual plans. His approach stems from his time apprenticed to Gordon Ford (1918–1999), considered, along with Edna Walling (1896–1973) and Ellis ‘Rocky’ Stones (1895–1975), as one of the pioneers of the Australian natural-style garden. “Working without a plan is complete freedom as it allows the design to evolve in response to what the site needs,” says Sam. Of course, for this to work, Sam needs to be on site and to that end, he and his team do all the landscaping and planting themselves – just as Ford once did. “Even at the age of 77, as one of the leading designers in the country, Gordon still had a shovel in his hand,” says Sam. “Working like this means we see where the sun comes up and where it falls, how the wind comes through – we just gain so much more understanding of the place.”

As well as these practical lessons, Sam has also absorbed Ford’s philosophy about natural materials, native plants, soft landscaping (hard lines are very rare in Sam’s work) and boulder placement, all of which are in evidence here. The builders had to make some dramatic, deep cuts to sit the house in the landscape so Sam’s first job, after the polygala had been cleared, was to reshape the dune around the building, connecting the house to its environment, and to work out the location of the grassed area (which also follows the form of the dune), trampoline and camping area, requested by the clients for their children. Around 2,500 plants, all endemic to the coastline, were then planted, the vast majority of which were from just a handful of species: the coastal tea tree (*Leptospermum laevigatum*); moonah ▷

Above The pool, also designed by Godsell, is situated at the top of the site to provide views out to the coast. To the right is a silver banksia or honeysuckle tree (*Banksia marginata*), which bears large, golden, bottlebrush-like flowers in summer, much loved by bees and honeyeater birds.

Left above The dark-tipped sandhill sword sedge (*Lepidosperma gladiatum*) was existing on the site, though looking rather sad. After mulching and a little irrigation it has revived to form a spectacular backdrop to the silvery swathe of *Olearia lanuginosa*, covered in white, daisy-like flowers in spring.

Left below The building is clad in an Australian hardwood known as blackbutt, whose greyish tones blend well with the surrounding bush. The plant at the base of the concrete support is *Atriplex cinerea*, grey saltbush, which produces globular clusters of flowers and, as its name suggests, is highly salt-tolerant.

We don't have dramatic changes of colour through autumn. It's about noticing the subtle changes



▷ trees (*Melaleuca lanceolata*) with their cream, bottlebrush-like flowers, *Banksia integrifolia* and some local wattles (*Acacia*) among them. All were heavily mulched with a 7-10cm layer of recycled timber chippings (the same material that forms the paths) to suppress weeds and maintain moisture.

"The soil is really low in nutrients and humus here, and I think my biggest concern was whether the plants would grow and whether I would get a good result for the clients," says Sam. The severe droughts that have now become commonplace – 17 years of Sam's 20-year career since Ford died have seen drought – were also a worry. "Luckily, we struck two really good seasons after planting and everything has just taken off," he says.

The result is a calm, serene and broadly constant landscape where the interest comes from the details – the sinuous, twisting bark in the coastal tea trees, for example, the flush of white when they flower in spring, the yellow blossom of the wattles, or the effect of the light filtering through the grasses. "We don't have dramatic changes of colour through autumn, or the dropping of foliage you get with deciduous trees," says Sam. "It's about noticing the subtle changes and slowing down enough to do that."

Subtlety could indeed be the byword for Sam's work. Now that the building work is complete, from many angles it's almost impossible to tell where the natural vegetation ends and the garden begins, which is just how Sam likes it. "If we can recreate that experience of nature in people's own environments, then I feel like we're hitting the mark," he says. □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Find out more about Sam's work at samcoxlandscape.com

Above Sam has planted a moonah tree (*Melaleuca lanceolata*) at the corner of the house, chosen for its sculptural form. Depending on the angle of the sun, it casts beautiful shadows through the house's shutters. In summer, it is covered in white bottlebrush flowers.

Right above The house looks directly on to this grove of ancient tea trees. To enhance the sense of drama, Sam has planted a line of *Poa labillardierei* at their base, backgrounding it with a glade of brighter green bower spinach, *Tetragonia implexicoma*, an excellent groundcover.

Right below Sam included the grassed area at the request of his clients, who wanted somewhere for their children to play. The grass is Santa Ana couch grass, which is drought tolerant once established. The tree at the centre is a coastal tea tree, whose trunks has been partially submerged by the sandy soil with no ill effects.



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NEW START

A former car park at Southampton General Hospital has been transformed by Amanda Levete's ceramic-walled pavilion and naturalistic planting into a woodland glade oasis for cancer charity Maggie's. Designed by Sarah Price working with architects AL_A, the garden for Maggie's Centre Southampton draws on the ecology of the New Forest with birch trees underplanted with woodland plants that are reflected in mottled, stainless steel cladding. The centre itself comprises four zones, each of which opens on to its own private garden through full-height sliding doors that disappear into the walls. sarahpricelandscapes.com





① LIFE IN SQUARES

Architecture practice Tonkin Liu is refining its design for Grosvenor Square in Mayfair before submitting it for planning permission later this year. The design will transform the central London square from a green space with just one species of tree to a biodiverse urban garden. Plans show a path leading through a mosaic of at least 50 new trees of various sizes that will support wildlife, woodland plants and wildflowers. The historic oval space in the centre of the square will be planted with a flowering lawn. Water will be collected and stored in a series of channels and in a pond.

grosvenor.com



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② MUSIC PARK

A music-themed park, designed by the Shanghai office of LabD+H, has been created around the Blackstone Apartments in Shanghai, the oldest baroque apartment building in China and currently the staff dormitory of the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra. Native plants have been used to green the building's façade and the narrow in-between spaces at ground level, and textured stone walls form partitions to create discrete spaces. Existing mature trees have been retained, including plane trees, and new elements have been introduced, including musical fountains, a stone wall garden and a tree shadow garden. dhscape.com

③ KING'S CROSSING

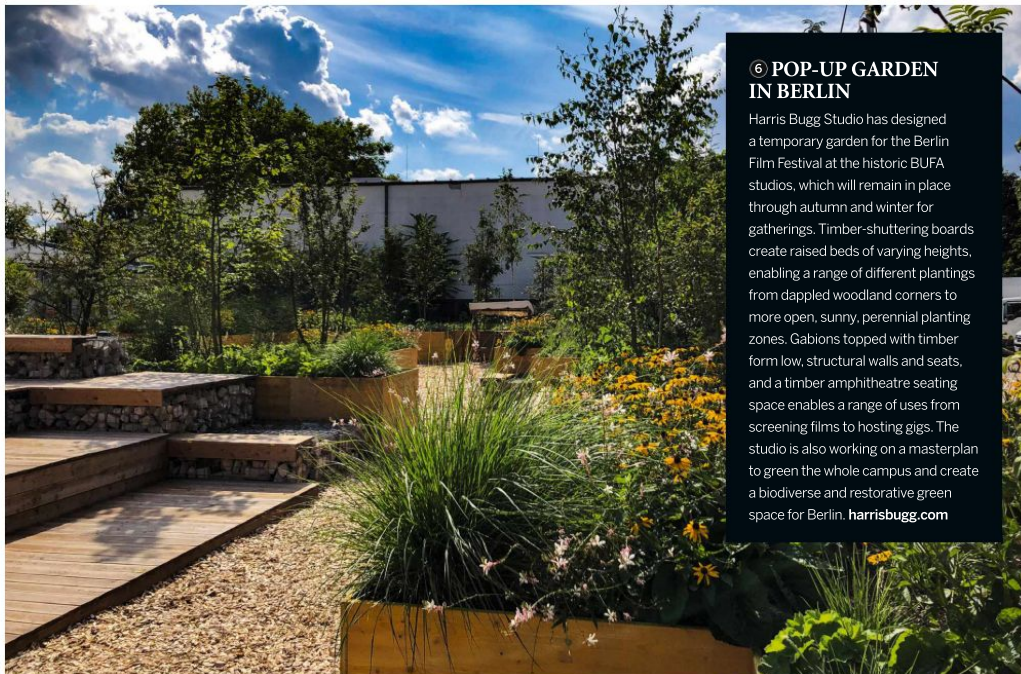
Esperance Bridge has opened at London's King's Cross Development. The bright-red pedestrian bridge, which connects King's Cross and St Pancras stations and Pancras Square with the Thomas Heatherwick-designed Coal Drops Yard and Granary Square, was designed by Moxon Architects with Arup. With a smooth truss form, the bridge's triangle design, created from folded ribbons of carbon steel, references a 19th-century railway bridge. It was named by local school children after the Esperance Club, a social project set up in the 1890s for dressmakers, and led by two suffragettes. moxonarchitects.com

④ IN THE ROUND

AND-RÉ Arquitetura has won a competition to design a Tourist Information building for Tabolado Garden in Chaves, Portugal. The circular building has a base of timber pillars and beams and is clad in vertical timber slats, echoing the trunks of the surrounding garden trees. Two arches, which are lit at night, frame the doors and windows that give on to the open-space room, which has an exposed wood ceiling. The circular design is accented by a curved reflecting pool in front of the building, which references the thermal importance of Chaves. and-re.pt

⑤ DESERT GARDEN

The garden of a private property, Ghost West, in the desert area of Paradise Valley, Arizona, is among the winners of the ninth annual Architizer A+ Awards. Designed by Colwell Shelor Landscape Architects, for a two-and-a-half-acre sloping site, the scheme removed a water-intensive planting palette and replaced it with complementary species from a rid regions around the world. Views to the adjacent mountains were opened up and the site has been reconnected to the native plants of the surrounding desert lands. Storm water is collected to irrigate the lawn area. architizer.com



⑥ POP-UP GARDEN IN BERLIN

Harris Bugg Studio has designed a temporary garden for the Berlin Film Festival at the historic BUFA studios, which will remain in place through autumn and winter for gatherings. Timber-shuttering boards create raised beds of varying heights, enabling a range of different plantings from dappled woodland corners to more open, sunny, perennial planting zones. Gabions topped with timber form low, structural walls and seats, and a timber amphitheatre seating space enables a range of uses from screening films to hosting gigs. The studio is also working on a masterplan to green the whole campus and create a biodiverse and restorative green space for Berlin. harrisbugg.com



⑦ PHILADELPHIA FLOWER SHOW

An installation, by New York-based Nomad Studio, of more than 1,200 forestry seedling kokedamas has won gold and the Governor's Trophy for the most innovative or unique design at this year's Philadelphia Flower Show. The kokedamas, chosen to evoke the importance of soil as an often overlooked habitat, were suspended in an inverted dome made out of woven steel. Visitors entered the installation via an L-shaped path to immerse themselves in the micro-woodland. The seedlings sprouting from the mossy globes were a mix of species native to the northeast region of the USA and the majority will live on in the Tyler Arboretum, Media, Philadelphia. thenomadstudio.net



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Photo: R Alexander

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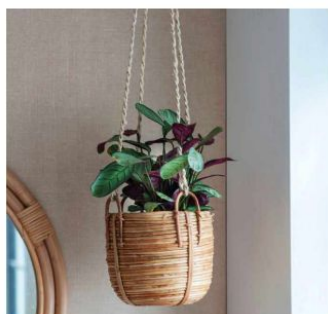
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After we start to leave behind us the gloom of a tricky 18 months across the globe, which country is enjoying savouring the delights of a glass or two of wine the most, as a whole, and per head?

• **Countries*** – In 2020, the USA drank the most at around 3.3bn litres, followed by France, Italy and Germany. The UK came in next with 1.3bn litres supplied nationwide, and the top ten is finished by China, Russia, Spain, Argentina and Australia.

• **Per head†** – The leader board here is, interestingly, quite different! Portugal sits on top with the average amount of litres drunk in the year for one person (over 15 years of age) at 62.1. Next is little Luxembourg with 55.5 litres per capita, then France and Italy. The UK is at number five again, with a more modest 22.6 litres per head, followed by the USA with 12.4 litres. Chin chin everyone!



To redeem all of these offers and more, go to gardensillustrated.com/events-and-offers

Sources: *The International Organisation of Vine & Wine (OIV) in its new 2020 annual report.
† Annual database of global wine markets, 1835-2018, from the American Association of Wine Economists (AAWE)



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DOWNTOOLS

Book reviews, back issues, crossword, competition, a weekend in...

A slightly rain-battered and self-seeded *Papaver rhoeas* 'Amazing Grey' embodies Lucy Hunter's *wabi-sabi*-style aesthetic of floral arrangements explored in her new book *The Flower Hunter*, reviewed on page 108.





**THE FLOWER HUNTER:
SEASONAL FLOWERS
INSPIRED BY NATURE
AND GATHERED FROM
THE GARDEN**

by Lucy Hunter

Ryland Peters & Small, £30
ISBN 978-1788793841

Seasonality and self-knowledge are at the heart of this beautiful, inspirational and refreshingly fun book by the floral polymath Lucy Hunter.

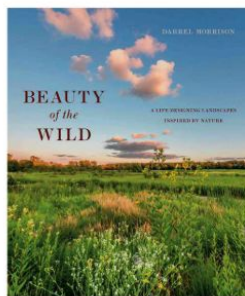
Reviewer Hannah Gardner is a horticulturist and garden writer.

This cross-genre book weaves together the art of gardening, floristry and decorative crafts, encouraging us to slow down and find our own creative voice – to ‘explore those things that truly fascinate you rather than whatever is deemed to be the trend of the moment’. Author Lucy Hunter has a degree in fine art and 20 years’ experience of working as a landscape designer and floral artist around the world, but she treads lightly, wandering around her subject and narrating with humour while spilling out useful tips and sharing stories from her journey.

The chapters flow through the natural cycle of a year (understandably splitting the abundance of summer into early and late season). Feeling included, we share time in her studio in North Wales. Dipping into her own garden for floral material, she also explores the local countryside and other interesting gardens, seeking inspiration in the everyday. Her warm commentary binds the vintage-feel images and well-

chosen topics together. Spring brings a sense of optimism and pretty ideas for growing bulbs in pots for indoor display. Natural dyeing and harvesting flowers for drying are for the warm days of late summer and autumn. Each chapter culminates in a project and for me it is this aspect of the book that really shines.

Hunter guides and cajoles us, step by step, into completing five eclectic, creative tasks that connect us to the season, including creating journals, arranging a summer table full of spilly, romantic urns and devising a towering, spring sculpture complete with painted backdrop, which is frankly a bit kooky and definitely my favourite. The exquisite photographs and floral arrangements are all by the author. The aesthetic is dream-like, muted and painterly, a kind of *wabi-sabi* ‘beauty in imperfection’ vibe that is grounded by the effortless, unpretentious text and leaves you feeling inspired and confident.



**BEAUTY OF THE WILD:
A LIFE DESIGNING
LANDSCAPES INSPIRED
BY NATURE**

by Darrel Morrison

Library Of American
Landscape History, £30
ISBN 978-1952620287

One of the most influential landscape designers in the USA tells the absorbing story of his career, in both practice and in teaching.

Reviewer Noel Kingsbury is a garden designer and writer.

Although they are generally an articulate lot, garden and landscape people rarely write their autobiographies. So it is a pleasure to read this, by one of the key people in what has been one of the greatest developments in our field for decades – the American native plant movement. Darrel Morrison has had a distinguished academic career but with plenty of practice too, and has played an important role in the creation of some of the USA’s most significant landscape projects that have involved native species.

Morrison is an engaging writer – his text and life story pulled me in straight away. His memories of farm life as a child in the 1950s in Iowa are a pleasure to read. More striking is his recollection of entering a flower-arranging competition at the county fair at the age of 14.

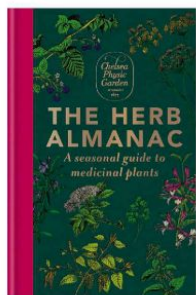
Morrison was lucky in that his first job, with a planning commission in Maryland, enabled him to use native

plants, in which in the early 1960s there was almost zero interest. President Lyndon B Johnson’s wife, ‘Lady Bird’ Johnson, then helped the movement along with her promotion of highway beautification using native wildflowers, thereby making life easier for advocates of naturalistic planting.

An academic career followed, most of it spent at the University of Georgia, and some writing – reading and meeting him in 2001, I was struck by his clear-sighted description of what naturalistic planting design must achieve. It was interesting to discover how his work has clearly been informed by a lifelong love of the visual arts.

This book is a great insight into the huge changes that are being made in the way that landscapes are being planted in the USA, by one of its most engaging spokespeople, who unlike some in the field, has promoted native plants with a quiet and undogmatic patience.

BOOK REVIEWS



THE HERB ALMANAC: A SEASONAL GUIDE TO MEDICINAL PLANTS
by Chelsea Physic Garden

Aster, £12.99
ISBN 978-1783254590

An engaging introduction to the world of herbal medicine – and one that would make a lovely gift – with beautiful, hand-drawn, line illustrations.

Reviewer Alys Fowler is a garden writer and horticulturist.

There is a hunger for connection right now, for an earthy, wholesome take on the world around us, and out of this has sprung a suite of books on the seasons, their festive and notable days, their rhythms and reasons. *The Herbal Almanac* is a lovely little addition to this library. It is published in conjunction with the Chelsea Physic Garden in London. This garden was founded in the 17th century for the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries and thus its staff know a thing or two about the history of plants and their medicines.

This neat volume organises its herbs by the four seasons with a nod to the eight ancient Celtic festivals (Beltane, Imbolc, etc) that traditionally represent the year as a wheel rather than a linear list and with this all the healers, witches, elders, cunning folk and wise women that have made up our long lineage of using plants for healing.

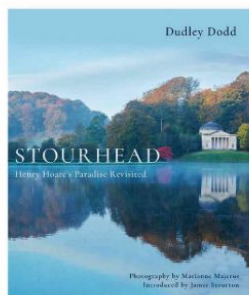
Thus, each entry – whether nettles in spring, feverfew in summer or elderberries in autumn – is a brief but

excellent potted history of the plant's traditional use and folklore both ancient and more recent – Harry Potter and Beatrix Potter both get a mention – with a diligent note on wild harvesting or how to grow in the garden depending on the plant's size and rambunctious nature.

Finally, a note on how to use plants in the kitchen or medicine cabinet. The recipes here are not so much for medicines, but healthful foods, tisanes, simple flower and herb syrups, and hedgerow jellies.

By winter, when the outside world is deep asleep, some more tropical and southern plants make an appearance – ginger, eucalyptus and cinnamon among the garlic, bay and rosemary – to bring warmth to the colder months.

In short, this is a delightful publication to dip into for inspiration on what to go out and pick each month, and a wonderful gift for anyone eager to dip their toe into herbs for the first time.



STOURHEAD: HENRY HOARE'S PARADISE REVISITED
by Dudley Dodd

Head of Zeus, £40
ISBN 978-1788543620

Dodd displays his deep knowledge of a property he has studied over decades, in this entertaining account of one of our greatest landscape gardens.

Reviewer Ambra Edwards is an author and garden historian.

There was a time when you could sit in a kind of rotating barrel overlooking the lake at Stourhead, pressing a foot pedal to change your view. You might take tea in a Turkish tent, or shelter from the sun in a shady hermitage 'lined inside & out with Old Gouty nobby oaks'. On such a hot summer's day, the owner and creator of the garden, Henry Hoare, known as 'Henry the Magnificent', might be found wallowing in a cold bath in his grotto to the sound of a small band. Art historian Dudley Dodd, who has written so many invaluable guidebooks to National Trust properties, brings both house and garden vividly to life as he traces their changing fortunes from the summer retreat of a charitable 18th-century banker to 'knockout' visitor attraction – albeit, we discover, in many ways diminished from its former glory (although looking at the glorious photographs of Marianne Majerus, that can be hard to credit).

It makes for a gripping family saga, with heroes,

starting with 'Good' Henry, who built the original Palladian house, and villains (the wicked 5th Baronet, who abandoned Stourhead for a gambler's life in Paris) and those in between, such as the austere antiquarian Richard Colt Hoare, who destroyed so many of his grandfather's delightful follies.

What is wonderful about this book is its range. Every one of the many illustrations is relevant and illuminating. Dodd draws on myriad accounts of the garden, from breathless teenage diaries to the narratives of grumpy visiting clergy. (The appendix with brief descriptions of these sources is a resource for which anyone interested in garden history will be thankful.) And Dodd is especially good at setting the garden in context, showing the connections between the Hoares and other garden makers, and similar features in contemporary gardens. A magnificent achievement.

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BOOK REVIEWS



THE JUNGLE GARDEN
by Philip Oostenbrink

Filbert Press, £25
ISBN 978-1999734565

A thorough and considered guide to tropical planting for adventurous gardeners – no matter what the size of their space.

Reviewer Alice Vincent is an author and gardening journalist.

The pandemic achieved something that otherwise seemed unlikely: inspiring a wanderlust for outdoor horticulture among those who previously had eyes only for houseplants. The existing indoor trend for the tropical plantscape proved more popular when people were trapped in their homes, but it also became something to achieve outdoors. It's fitting, then, that gardener, writer and lifelong foliage fan Philip Oostenbrink began to think about transforming his next garden space into a jungle during lockdown.

The Jungle Garden shows plenty of his thinking and knowledge. It's a tome worthy of a coffee table, packed with detail and ideas, spanning plant groups for different spaces according to light levels; eight lust-inducing gardens for inspiration; and an in-depth guide to jungle plant care. If you ever wanted to know how to coppice a *Catalpa*, Oostenbrink has got your back.

Where *The Jungle Garden* succeeds – arguably like the

best garden designs – is in its attention to detail. The cleverly illustrated chapter on leaf shape, for instance, is a great example of bringing potentially dry botanical fact to exciting, practical purpose. Armed with this knowledge, the reader can then better understand the rest of Oostenbrink's tome, much of which encourages and celebrates the perfect combination of foliage plants to create the much longed-for green escape.

No page is spared luscious photography by Sarah Cuttle, and while the sheer variety of the fronds and *Ficus* may seem overwhelming, *The Jungle Garden* is a book that rewards close and repeated reading. Come for the eye-candy, stay for the clever planting tips. If anything is its downfall, it's knowing how to navigate Oostenbrink's book: there are brilliant guides to gardens constricted by everything from shade, pots and ugly boundaries here, but trying to find them can be like exploring a jungle.



**THE GARDEN BOOK
(REVISED EDITION)**
by Toby Musgrave and
Tim Richardson

Phaidon Press Ltd, £39.95
ISBN 978-1838663209

A lavish catalogue of over 500 designers and their iconic gardens and landscapes from across the globe and throughout history.

Reviewer Rae Spencer-Jones is books publisher at the RHS.

The first edition of *The Garden Book* was published in 2000 when it became an instant bestseller for publisher Phaidon.

Spanning continents across the globe and representing gardens and landscapes throughout history, this revised edition is every bit as lavish as the original. Of the over 500 entries, 150 are new or updated.

The images are sumptuous, showcasing the gardens at their very best. Organised alphabetically by designer or garden owner, each image is accompanied by a concise narrative that captures the essence of the garden or landscape, as well as an insight into the designer or owner.

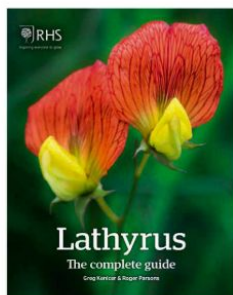
Many of the designers and their gardens and landscapes are familiar icons that have rightly earned their place in this book for their imagination, innovation and execution. Consider 'Capability' Brown's vast and 'natural' English landscape at Blenheim Palace; dreamy Giardini di Ninfa in Italy created by three generations of the Caetani

family among the ruins of a medieval town; and Thomas Church's Modernist El Novillero (Donnell Garden) in California.

However, a pleasing number of perhaps lesser-known gardens make an appearance too. At an altitude of 2,000m, Elie Saab's Mountain Retreat in Fagra, Lebanon, by Vladimir Djurovic, is a spectacular representation of the harmony that can co-exist between the natural and man-made environment. In contrast, the Woodland Cemetery near Stockholm, created by architect Gunnar Asplund between 1935 and 1940, is one of the earliest successful examples of modern architecture set within a traditional landscape – a technique for which Asplund became well known.

With an informative glossary and useful directory of gardens open to visitors, this is a classic catalogue of the world's finest. Above all, it is testament to the extraordinary brilliance of those who created these gardens, whether expressions of power or wealth or labours of love.

BOOK REVIEWS



LATHYRUS: THE COMPLETE GUIDE

by Greg Kenicer and Roger Parsons

Royal Horticultural Society, £40
ISBN 978-1911666127

A wide-ranging, detailed, scientific and practical study of a much-loved garden plant with invaluable coverage of cultivars for gardeners.

Reviewer Matthew Biggs is a Kew-trained gardener and presenter.

There was general rejoicing among plantspeople and gardeners when the RHS decided to revisit its tradition of publishing monographs on garden plants. It began with *Kniphofia* in 2016, and has included *Hedera* and *Wisteria*, and the latest outstanding offering is a comprehensive study of the popular genus *Lathyrus*, including the garden favourite sweet peas.

The authors, a respected taxonomist and a long-time enthusiast, who both hold Plant Heritage National Collections, combine their experience and enthusiasm to create this definitive work. As you would expect of a monograph, each subject is covered in minute detail, from history, classification, morphology and distribution, to subjects of particular interest to the gardener, such as breeding, selection and cultivation.

The list of species is fascinating and enlightening, and the comprehensive list of cultivars and accompanying images will have every keen

gardener reaching for the catalogues. There are also some delicious facts to savour, including how Gertrude Jekyll used *Lathyrus latifolius* as a climber growing up cones in herbaceous borders then 'pulling them down' as infill when neighbouring plants had gone over, and how *L. japonicus* was a favourite of Darwin and his contemporaries when testing the viability of sea-drifted seeds. This global overview also covers history and cultivation, including soils, the best cultivars for fragrance and plant associations in detail, and reveals the stories of great breeders, such as Henry Eckford of Wem in Shropshire, and the origin of the Spencer sweet peas.

Packed with photographs, this well-illustrated book is well worth the price, and will be of interest to the many gardeners who are passionate about sweet peas and would like to know more about their background and cultivation. Those yet to be fully seduced by their charms will soon find themselves growing more.

Other books

Inspirational, practical or both, October's additional books range from foraging and bonsai care to smart gardening and poetry.



FORAGING FOR EDIBLE WILD PLANTS (3RD EDITION)

by Gail Harland,
Green Books, £12.99
ISBN 978-0857845511

The latest edition of this popular book features over 50 edible wild species and talks you through how to spot and cultivate them.



THE HEALTHY GARDEN BOOK

by Kathleen Norris Brenzel and Mary-Kate Mackey,
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RHS GARDENING SCHOOL

by Simon Akeroyd and Dr Ross Bayton,
Octopus Publishing Group, £20
ISBN 978-1784728106

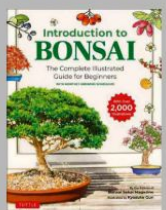
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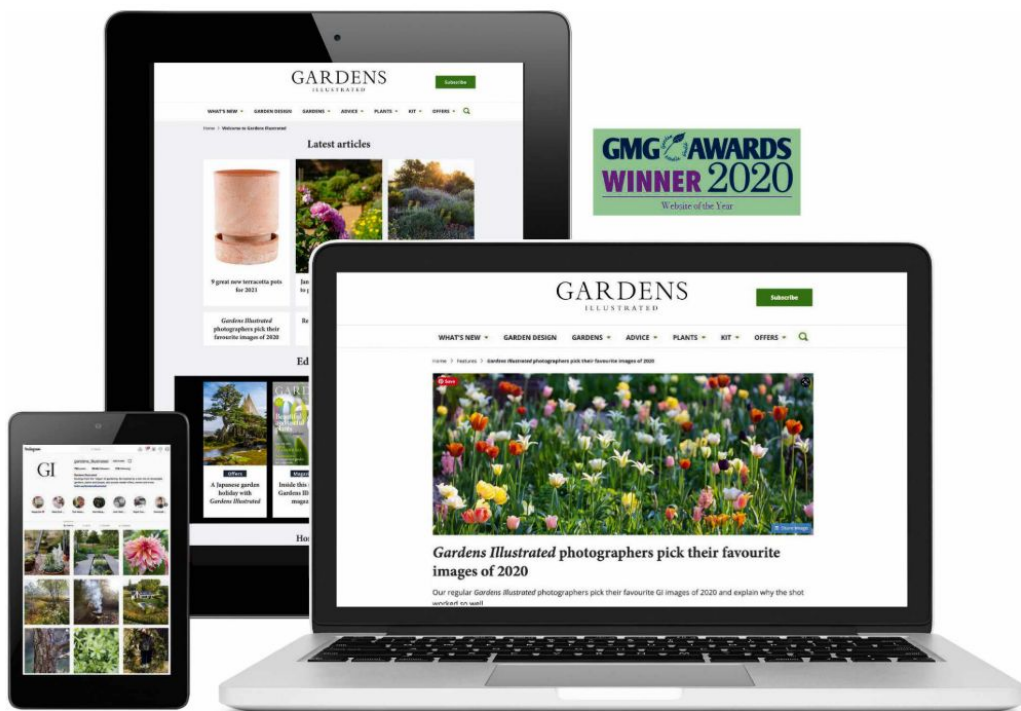
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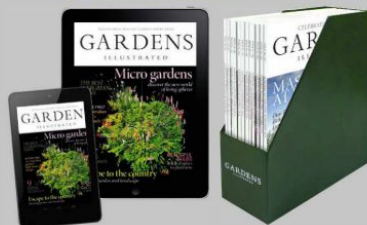
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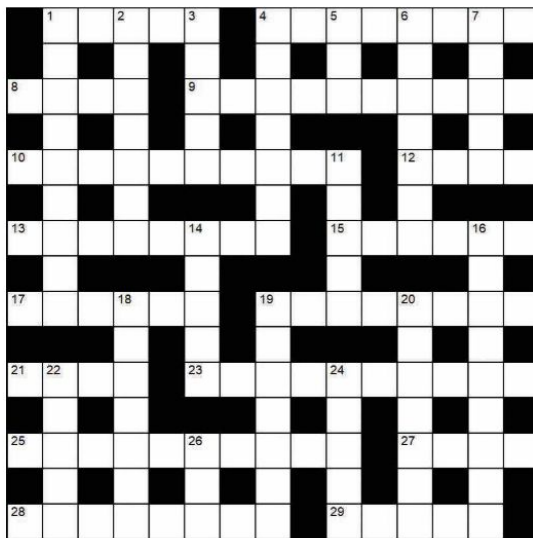
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Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 Plants of genus *Matteuccia* and *Dryopteris*, eg ostrich ____ (5)
- 4 A *Chaenomeles x superba* with apple-like fruit – pa kindly transplanted (4,4)
- 8 Spring flower also called flag (4)
- 9 Succulent, ____ *spinosa* with rosette of foliage – unusual scary shoot (10)
- 10 Plant of *Itea* genus, with cream or pale green racemes – wipes trees out! (5,5)
- 12 A snowdrop is named after this foremost 1950s gardener, Margery ____ (4)
- 13 Genus of the Cape or African daisy – makes cats riot! (8)
- 15 Robert happily includes a snowdrop with a distinctive H marking on inner petals (6)
- 17 A magenta-flowering *Nerine bowdenii* – is able to change slightly
- 19 *Primula* cultivars with glowing colours – now a chic variety (8)
- 21 Invasive Japanese plant *Fallopia japonica*, ____ weed (4)
- 23 Genus of blue-flowering bogland plants – possibly are pointed (10)
- 25 Genus of campanula relative with blue flower spikes – moves pro on ahead (10)
- 27 Small onion bulbs ready for planting (4)
- 28 A named *Nicandra physalodes* – dark, ripened seed case of vetch? (5,3)
- 29 What keen plant collectors do ... *Camassia*, partly (5)

DOWN

- 1 A blue-white bi-coloured agapanthus ... a pyrotechnic display! (9)
- 2 Healthiest-looking – and most like a floribunda? (7)
- 3 Fruits of *Prunus spinosa* (blackthorn) (5)
- 4 Plants with showy, bowl-shaped flowers – puts energy into ponies! (7)
- 5 Eg filbert (3)
- 6 Old Nick's name for a flaming-red *Crocus*! (7)
- 7 Genus of geum-like plants – upset drays (5)
- 11 Term for a downpipe joint to eg divert water into a butt – possibly below (5)
- 14 Varieties of this bulb include 'Triumph' and 'Rembrandt' (5)
- 16 Early spring bulbs – after grapes they're muscari (9)
- 18 Related to plant study – Buczacki's first sort of action (7)
- 19 Agreement: it's an American cold-hardy, blue-black grape variety (7)
- 20 A compact white, tinged blue, clematis – for a major garden show venue (7)
- 22 Describes a plant with swellings (5)
- 24 Latin term meaning 'tall', partly correlatable (5)
- 26 Fleshy fruit's seed (3)

* Solutions to this issue's crossword will be printed in the November issue

SOLUTION TO SEPTEMBER ISSUE'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS 1 Acorus 5 Cerinthe 9 Filberts 10 Atropa 11 Yews 13 Klein 14 Herb 15 Crocus 16 Spruce 18 Umbels 20 Blossom 22 Hoop 24 Linum 27 Giotto 28 Sand leek 30 Gentiana 31 Argosy. DOWN 2 Chive 3 Rib 4 Strikes 5 Cosmeas 6 Rhamnus 7 Norah 8 Hypericum 12 Spore 15 Composite 17 Roses 19/25 Salsola 20 Banksia 21 Osmunda 23 Petit 26 Dress 29 Log.

READER COMPETITION

Win a luxury, two-night garden break at the Budock Vean Hotel in south Cornwall*

Gardens Illustrated has teamed up with the Budock Vean Hotel to offer a relaxing two-night stay on the banks of south Cornwall's tranquil Helford River. Set in 65 acres of glorious gardens and woodland, the award-winning hotel is a hidden gem.

Alongside its beautiful gardens, the four-star hotel offers excellent leisure facilities, including its own nine-hole golf course, a 15m indoor pool, two all-weather tennis courts and a heavenly spa. It is also perfectly placed for exploring the South West Coast Path, and the area's many historic towns and villages, beaches and traditional waterside pubs.

The hotel is a short walk from two of Cornwall's most celebrated gardens – the stunning Trebah Garden, a 26-acre subtropical paradise, and the National Trust's Glendurgan Garden, with three valleys full of natural beauty and amazing plants – and your prize will include entry for two to both of these gardens as well as a relaxing one-and-a-half-hour river cruise, courtesy of Helford River Cruises, from which you will be able to catch a glimpse of the gardens from the water and soak up the sights of this most beautiful part of Cornwall.

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- River cruise for two.

HOW TO ENTER

For your chance to win, answer the following question:

Cornwall's Helford River is the setting for which of Daphne du Maurier's novels?

- a) Jamaica Inn
- b) Rebecca
- c) Frenchman's Creek

Enter online at gardensillustrated.com/cornwallcomp

Closing date 11.59pm, 8 November 2021.
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Get inspired for the autumn season with the best plant and bulb suppliers



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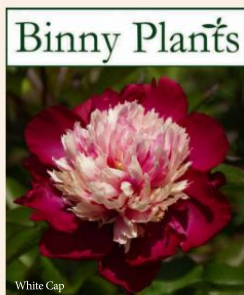
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Autumn gardens to visit

Autumn is a great time to visit this collection of stunning gardens



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2 HEVER CASTLE & GARDENS

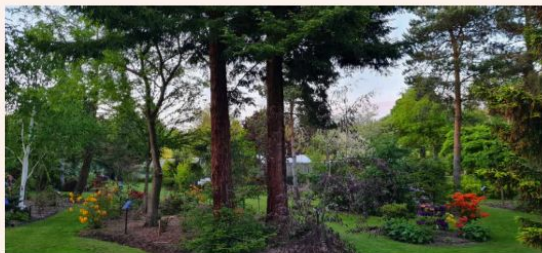
Autumn is the season when Hever's striking trees come to the fore. The Castle is arguably at its romantic best and you will be treated to glorious displays. Throughout October, Hever is celebrating the different coloured areas of the grounds and encouraging visitors to practice the art forest bathing. Edenbridge, Kent TN8 7NG | 01732 865224 | hevercastle.co.uk



3 THE YORKSHIRE ARBORETUM

At the change of season from summer to autumn, just half an hour north of York, the Yorkshire Arboretum bursts with colour. The hornbeams around the visitor centre are laden with beautiful fruits, with oranges, reds and golds offering spectacular autumn colour.

Castle Howard, York YO60 7BY | @yorksarboretum | yorkshirearboretum.org



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Nr Cranbrook TN17 2AB | 01580 710700 | nationaltrust.org.uk/sissinghurst

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How to spend a gardener's weekend in...

Upstate New York

Famed for its fiery autumnal colour, the area of upstate New York east of the Hudson River is a garden lover's paradise – especially those who love to indulge in a little antiques

More of a state of mind than a specific destination, 'upstate' spans a huge area north of New York City, ending at the Canadian border. The upstate referred to here is limited to a slice of landscape east of the Hudson River, starting in the town of Hudson and flowing about 40 miles south. Peak autumn leaf viewing is mid-October.

Heading up

Getting out of New York City by public transport can be complicated but **Hudson**, about 120 miles north of Manhattan, is reachable by direct train. With all the vim and vigour that a traveller might hope to find in an upstate town, Hudson offers a perfect weekend, not least in autumn (better known here as the fall). Start at **Kitty's Market**, across the way from the train station, to eat or shop, or both. Linger in grocery stores is natural when there is a café, including the excellent one at **Otto's Market** in nearby Germantown. The revival and reimagining of old establishments is conspicuous all across Hudson's **Warren Street**, in the middle of the town's historic street grid, with too

Otto's Market.



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Orangerie Garden
+ Home, Millbrook

much to gorge on in every direction. However, you could do worse than to stop at **Red Dot**, an old favourite.

Hotel, motel

Surrounded by farms and a cluster of small towns, Hudson is an ideal base for those who are interested in food and where it comes from. **Hawthorne Valley Farm** store, at

Harlemville, is considered to be one of the best suppliers of top-notch organic and biodynamic goods, while **Churhtown Dairy** is a leader in regenerative farming. In Ghent, there is **Kinderhook Farm** and **Made in Ghent**, both offering overnight stays. Hotels, round and about, stake their reputations on their locally sourced and beautifully produced food, open to all. These include **Hotel Tivoli** (in Tivoli), run by New York artists, **Rivertown Lodge**, **Wm Farmer & Sons**, and **The Maker**, all in Hudson. More spontaneous eating spots include **Gaskins**, Germantown and **Roe Jan Brewing Company**, Hillsdale.

Hotel Tivoli.



Antique, boutique

Hudson has in fact been a city since 1785, albeit a small one.

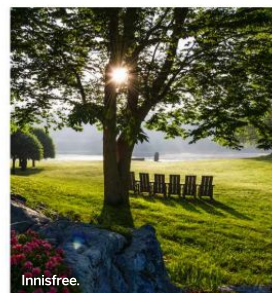
JC Rogerson's Hardware Store

was established in the early part of Hudson's industrial phase (1832) and it still stands proud on Warren Street, surrounded by arrivistes such as flower and gift shop **Flowerkraft**, and exuberant antique shop **Regan & Smith**. If a bent willow bench, a sleigh, or anything in between is of interest, head over to **The Antique Warehouse**, while **Hoffman's Barn** offers hours of antique hunting in nearby Red Hook. Travelling down the Hudson Valley, the antiques hotspot of **Millbrook** has become the focus for a new kind of destination shopping. Go there for upscale ephemera at **Orangerie Garden + Home**, and the smart country outpost of Manhattan's **Creel & Gow**.



Art of the garden

Around a Persian-inspired hilltop 'fortress', 19th-century artist Frederic Church and his wife Isabel established **Olana**. Basking in the kind of light that brought renown to the Hudson River School, (of which Church was a member), the brick mansion sits in a 250-acre park, designed by Church and now open without charge. It is Frank Gehry's turn at **The Fisher Center**, a truly stunning classical music venue on the rural campus of Bard College. Near Ghent, a 120-acre park is the home of gallery and performance space **Art Omi**. Heading east, **Pine Plains** is rapidly becoming a dining destination, with recently opened **Champetre** as well as **Stissing House**. Back down to Millbrook, **Innisfree** is the ultimate upstate garden destination, a forward-thinking landscape designed by Lester Collins in the 1930s, with the East in mind.



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